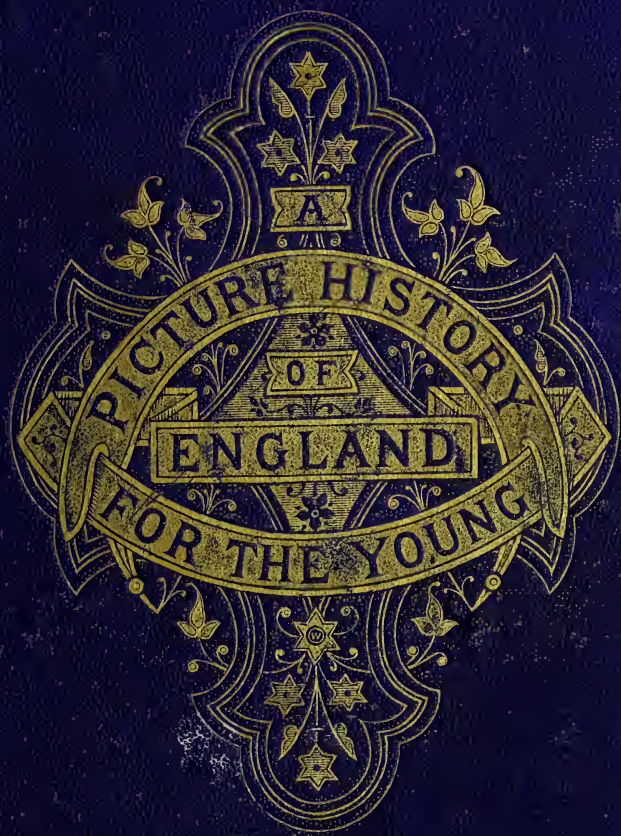
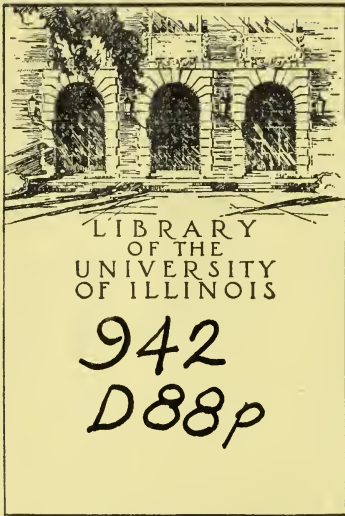


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A PICTURE  
HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

FROM THE INVASION OF JULIUS CÆSAR TO THE PRESENT TIME.

WRITTEN FOR THE USE OF THE YOUNG.

BY H. W. DULCKEN, PH.D.

ILLUSTRATED WITH

EIGHTY ENGRAVINGS

BY THE BROTHERS DALZIEL,

FROM DESIGNS BY

A. W. BAYES.

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## PREFACE.

IN writing this book, it has been the Author's endeavour to tell the Story of the British Nation in a series of chapters sufficiently plain to be within the comprehension of children, without making the volume a play-book ; as, in opposition to a very wide-spread notion, he holds that even the Outlines of History, acquired in sport, will not be retained in earnest.

The division of the work into parts or sections, and the sub-division into chapters, has been made advisedly. Each part comprises a distinct period of History, and should be made a subject of examination before the reader proceeds to the next. The chapters have been generally made of uniform length, each containing just as much as it is supposed may be readily retained after reading attentively once or twice.

Questions for examination, generally inserted in a work of this kind, have here been intentionally omitted. According to the Author's view, even young children should have something more than the "dry bones" of question and answer presented to them, if History is to become a study, not dependent entirely on a trick of memory or an aptitude for retaining isolated facts and figures.

17 Dec. 148 Ap. Calc. d. m.

## PREFACE.

The Illustrations, of which no fewer than eighty appear in the volume, have been inserted not merely to afford amusement to the young reader, but to assist the memory, and chiefly to complete, through the eye, the explanations which the limits of the work in many cases compelled the writer to give very briefly.

It has been, in general, the Author's endeavour to put into the volume as much as possible that should be learned, and to keep out of it anything that the reader would afterwards have to *unlearn*.

H. W. D.

LONDON, *December*, 1865.

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# THE KINGS AND QUEENS OF ENGLAND,

FROM THE CONQUEST TO THE PRESENT DAY.

Monarch.	Began to reign.	Died.	Monarch.	Began to reign.	Died.
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WILLIAM I. . . .	1066	1087	EDWARD VI. . . .	1547	1553
WILLIAM II. . . .	1087	1100	MARY I. . . . .	1553	1558
HENRY I. . . . .	1100	1135	ELIZABETH . . . .	1558	1603
STEPHEN . . . . .	1135	1154	THE STUART DYNASTY.		
THE PLANTAGENET DYNASTY.			JAMES I. . . . .	1603	1625
HENRY II. . . . .	1154	1189	CHARLES I. . . . .	1625	1649
RICHARD I. . . . .	1189	1199	(Interregnum.)		
JOHN . . . . .	1199	1216	THE PROTECTORATE.		
HENRY III. . . . .	1216	1272	OLIVER CROMWELL	1653	1658
EDWARD I. . . . .	1272	1307	(Interregnum.)		
EDWARD II. . . . .	1307	1327	THE RESTORATION.		
EDWARD III. . . . .	1327	1377	CHARLES II. . . . .	1660	1685
RICHARD II. . . . .	1377	1399	JAMES II. . . . .	1685	1688
THE LANCASTRIAN DYNASTY.			THE REVOLUTION.		
HENRY IV. . . . .	1399	1413	WILLIAM III. } . . . .	1688	{ 1702 1694
HENRY V. . . . .	1413	1422	AND MARY II. } . . . .		
HENRY VI. . . . .	1422 <sup>(Dep.)</sup>	1471	ANNE . . . . .	1702	1714
THE YORK DYNASTY.			THE BRUNSWICK DYNASTY.		
EDWARD IV. . . . .	1461	1483	GEORGE I. . . . .	1714	1727
EDWARD V. . . . .	1483	1483	GEORGE II. . . . .	1727	1760
RICHARD III. . . . .	1483	1485	GEORGE III. . . . .	1760	1820
THE TUDOR DYNASTY.			GEORGE IV. . . . .	1820	1830
HENRY VII. . . . .	1485	1509	WILLIAM IV. . . . .	1830	1837
HENRY VIII. . . . .	1509	1547	VICTORIA . . . . .	1837	( <i>Vivat Regina.</i> )

## CHAPTER I.

### ANCIENT BRITAIN AND ITS INHABITANTS.

The first inhabitants of Britain—Celts and Teutons—Their manners and customs—Their weapons—Their herds of cattle—Their dislike of the sea—The Druids—Their manner of worship—Cruel sacrifices, &c.

IN this book I purpose to give my young readers an account of the chief events that have happened in England during the many hundreds of years that comprise its story or history. I wish to tell them of the kings who governed the land, and of the great men who worked for its advancement and prosperity; to record the battles fought and dangers endured from time to time; and to point out the changes that passed over England before it became the great and flourishing empire it now is. I shall begin by describing Britain as it existed in the very old days, at the time when our Saviour, from whose birth we count the dates of all events, came upon earth

The great Roman people, who had been conquering Southern and Western Europe piece by piece, had heard vague accounts given by travellers of an island, or rather of two islands lying close together, in the cold Northern Sea. The larger of these two islands was called Prydain or Britain—now it is England and Scotland. This island was inhabited by wild tribes of barbarians, savage, uncultivated, and cruel. They were of two separate races: those in the south belonging to the Teutons or Germans, a great race spread over different parts of Europe, while the rest of the Britons were Cymri or Celts, the name given to another great race. The Britons of the southern districts had commerce with France, or, as it was then called, Gaul; and as the Gauls were not quite so wild as the Britons generally, these southern Britons had begun to learn and practise some useful arts. They knew, for instance, how to prepare the fields and sow corn; and thus bread was not unknown among them as an article of food. Some of the merchant ships that traded about the coasts of Gaul also visited them from time to time, bringing

the produce of Gaul to Britain, and carrying away a few products, chiefly metals, in return.

But the Celtic Britons of the interior were as wild as any rude savages in the South Sea Islands. They wandered about in the marshes and morasses of their foggy, uncultivated country, quite ignorant of the arts of ploughing, sowing, and reaping, and generally without clothes of any kind. In winter, indeed, they covered themselves with the skins of wolves and other savage beasts, of which there were plenty in the thick forests; but in summer they were content to stain themselves, according to their savage notions of ornament, with a plant called woad, which produced a blue colour. Their weapons were heavy clubs, and swords and spears made of copper or tin, or of a mixture of several metals; they had axes too; and the heads of these axes were often made of flint; and on their left arm they carried a shield of copper. They were divided into a number of tribes, each tribe having its chief, and being generally at war with its neighbours; and when a great chief died, it was a custom among them to bury his weapons in the grave with him, and erect a mound of earth to show the spot where the warrior rested. Many of these mounds have been opened, and within them have been discovered the weapons of the Ancient Britons, and some of the rude ornaments they wore. In the British Museum may be seen many such memorials of the first inhabitants of Britain.

Though these painted wild men knew not how to cultivate fields, they possessed herds of cattle, and had some very strong and swift horses. In time of war they harnessed these horses to chariots, with scythes fastened to the axles of the wheels; and it will be imagined that these sharp scythes caused much damage when the chariots were driven at full speed into an enemy's ranks. Many of the Britons lived in the woods on acorns and berries, and must have led a very poor and rough life, though they were hardy, strong, and bold. Had they not wasted their strength by continual combats among themselves, they might have withstood the Romans.

The Celtic Britons were not, like the English of the present day, fond of sailing upon the mighty sea. They had frail little boats called coracles, made of a framework of wood covered over with hides, shaped



ANCIENT BRITONS.

like baskets, and so light that a man could carry one upon his back. They seem also to have had canoes, or boats made of the hollowed trunks of trees; but they did not love to tempt the perils of the deep, as the northern nations did, or to sail forth on a voyage in quest of adventure and plunder. But as they were by no means wanting in bravery, they roamed through the woods in quest of wild beasts, when they were not engaged in wars among themselves.

Like the other barbarian nations, the Britons were sunk in heathen darkness. They knew nothing of the true God, nor of the service that is perfect freedom. In the silent depths of the dark oak forests their priests taught them to practise a gloomy and wicked superstition. These priests, who were called Druids, made the ignorant people believe that the deities they worshipped were pleased with the spoils of war, and delighted in the blood of human beings slain in their honour. So at times, tall figures were built of wood and wicker-work, and within these figures were crowded a number of unhappy prisoners; and then the cruel Druids set fire to the whole mass, and the wretched savages rejoiced in the sufferings of the poor captives who were being roasted to death. The Druids were the judges and lawgivers, as well as the priests, of the Britons. They knew more than the ignorant people. They wore long robes and ornaments of gold. The people respected them greatly, and were much afraid of them; for even among the most savage and debased the proverb holds true that "knowledge is power."

The dwellings of the Britons were wretched huts; but the temples in which the Druids carried on their rites were formed of circles of stones, so huge in size that some of them looked as though giants and not ordinary men had piled them together. Some of these temples still remain. The most famous is the circle of stones on Salisbury Plain, called Stonehenge, though the old British name for it was *Choir-guar*, or the "Giant's dance."

Such were the oldest inhabitants of England, nineteen hundred years ago: cruel savages without knowledge, arts, or true religion, inhabiting a dreary tract of forest, marsh, and fen.



## CHAPTER II.

### THE ROMANS CONQUER BRITAIN.

Warlike character of the Romans—Julius Cæsar—His conquest of Gaul—He invades Britain—The Britons left to themselves—Visit of Claudius—Conquest of Britain by Ostorius and other Generals—The story of Caractacus—Massacre of the Druids.

IN those days the Romans were the strongest nation in the world. For many years they had been sending their armies into one country after another; and wherever they fought, they were certain in the end to become masters. The chief reason of this success was to be found in the skill of the Roman generals, the excellent order of the Roman troops, and the quality of the Roman weapons. What, for instance, could the heavy copper swords used by the Gauls be expected to do against the keen polished steel of the Roman weapon? or how could the barbarians, brave though they were, stand up against men who had been trained to war, and whom it was very difficult to throw into disorder, while the barbarians, on the other hand, hardly knew what order meant? No wonder that the Romans conquered half the world. They were employed in this task at the time concerning which I am now writing; and the greatest of the generals who arrived in this country on the work of slaughtering the barbarians, and taking away their property, was named Julius Cæsar.

He was a mighty man, this Cæsar, and has left a great name in the history of the Romans. In the year 55 before the birth of our Lord, he had succeeded, after fighting hard for ten years, in conquering the whole of Gaul, or the countries now called France, Holland, and Belgium. In Gaul he heard of an island whose people were brave and unconquered; and one day he appeared opposite the English coast, with a fleet of ships and twelve thousand soldiers. On the coast of Kent, not very far from where the important town of Dover now stands, Cæsar and his troops landed. The natives did all they could to drive the Romans away, and fought right bravely for their liberty; but they were no match for the

Roman general and his soldiers, who had practised the art of war in a hundred battles in Gaul and elsewhere.

In spite of their valour and their scythe chariots, the poor Britons were several times defeated, and Cæsar compelled them to beg for peace. He himself was called away into Gaul; and as soon as he was gone, the Britons forgot that they had been beaten, and probably thought very little more of the Roman conqueror or of his victories.

But the next year Cæsar came again, with a larger force than before. The Britons, united under a chief called Cassivelaunus or Caedwallow, turned out manfully to fight him. But Cassivelaunus was vanquished, and his city was burned by Cæsar, who marched through the southern part of the island, crossed the Thames, and might have made himself master of all Britain, if he had not been called elsewhere. His presence was required in Gaul, where there was work of more consequence for him than the task of conquering the naked Britons. So he sailed away; and though the story of his triumphs over the Britons makes a very pretty chapter in the book of his conquests, it is difficult to say what real advantage he ever derived from it.

For nearly a hundred years the Britons heard nothing more of the Romans, and at last Cæsar's invasion must have been to them but a story told by the old men among them, who had heard it from their fathers as a thing that happened long ago. For at Rome events happened of so grave a nature as almost to drive from the minds of the Romans all remembrance of the dull foggy island beyond the seas. The mighty Cæsar was slain in the midst of his glory. A great war followed, and then the form of government was changed, and emperors ruled over the people in the imperial city of Rome.

It was *Anno Domini* 43, or forty-three years after the birth of our Lord, that Claudius, a weak, foolish emperor, thought of achieving the conquest of Britain, and proceeded thither from Gaul, after first sending his general Plautius before him, to clear the way and do the fighting. Claudius remained but a few days in Britain, and soon returned to Rome, leaving Plautius to finish the work. That general really conquered part of the island; and from this time the Romans pushed their conquests steadily forward through Britain, defeating one tribe after another.



LANDING OF JULIUS CÆSAR.

It was the misfortune of the Britons that they were divided into a number of separate tribes or nations, such as the Iceni, the Cantii, the Regni, and many others, and that they had no sort of union or agreement among themselves. The Romans knew that nations, like men, are weak when disunited, and only become strong when they act together with hearty accord and agreement. Consequently, they attacked these nations separately, and subdued them one after the other, until at last the whole of England, as far north as Yorkshire, had submitted to the valiant general, Ostorius.

One king, however, resisted the Romans with great valour and perseverance. This was Caractacus or Caradoc, a king of the people called Silures, who inhabited the borders of Wales. For nine long years did this brave Caractacus defend his land against the advancing Romans, and every defeat seemed to make him more determined. But at last the Roman discipline prevailed. He lost a great battle, fell with his wife and daughter into the hands of the Romans, and was sent to Italy, where his captors led him in chains through the streets of Rome. The brave barbarian never lost his courage; but when he saw the regal riches and splendour of the city, which was then called the capital of the world, he exclaimed in very natural surprise, "How is it possible that people possessed of such magnificence at home, should envy men humble cottages in Britain?" He did not know, poor simple barbarian! that when covetousness enters into the hearts of a people, they will crave for more and more possessions, however great their wealth may be, and that the more they gain the less they can enjoy. He was led before Claudius, the emperor, who, weak-minded though he was, felt compassion and admiration for his prisoner, and treated him with kindness and honour.

Some time after, when Claudius had been succeeded by the wicked Nero, a general named Suetonius Paulinus was sent into Britain. This Suetonius saw that the Druids incited the Britons to resist the Romans; he therefore marched to the island of Anglesea, or, as it was then called, Mona, where the Druids chiefly dwelt, conquered the island, and burned the priests, as they in their time had burned many poor prisoners of war: and when we think of the cruelties they practised and taught, their fate will not be thought altogether unjust or unmerited.

## CHAPTER III.

### BOADICEA'S REVOLT, AND OTHER IMPORTANT EVENTS.

Great revolt of the Britons—Burning of London—Battle gained by Suetonius—Death of Boadicea—Roman cities in Britain—Roman walls—The weakness of the Britons—The Romans abandon Britain—Pitiable condition of the Britons.

THE Romans were not generally cruel to those nations whom they conquered, except when the vanquished showed signs of restlessness or revolt; in such cases their severity was merciless. An event occurred to show the Britons the cruelty of the Romans when roused to vengeance.

Boadicea, the queen of a warlike tribe called the Iceni, had been grievously ill-treated by the Roman officers, who caused her to be beaten with rods, like a slave. Naturally indignant at this, Boadicea prevailed upon the Britons to unite in a general revolt against their conquerors. When Suetonius returned from his expedition to Mona, he found that the Britons were all in arms. They burned London, and slew a great number of the Romans. But here again the Roman discipline and knowledge prevailed. In a great battle the Britons were defeated, and eighty thousand are said to have been killed. Boadicea, very probably knowing that she had no mercy to expect if she fell into the hands of Suetonius, in her despair took poison, and died.

Thus the great revolt was quelled; and from that time the Britons submitted to their Roman masters quietly enough. Some years later, a great general, named Agricola, was sent as governor to Britain. Into the northern or Scottish part of the island, then called Caledonia, or the country of the Gaels, Agricola penetrated at the head of his soldiers. Everywhere he was successful, and in the narrowest part of Scotland, between the friths of Forth and Clyde, he established a number of troops, who were to prevent the wild savages of the north from disturbing the peaceful southern districts. Thus that part of the island which was yet uncivilized was shut off from the rest, and prevented from injuring the Britons who had submitted to the Roman sway.

## ROMAN CITIES AND WALLS—WEAKNESS OF THE BRITONS.

Not only was Agricola a great man in war: he taught the Britons many things, and showed them how to practise many arts with which the Romans had long been familiar, but which were quite novel and strange to the simple islanders. Gradually the Britons became Romanized; that is, they learned the Roman language, dressed themselves in the Roman garb, and became altogether like the Romans—with this important difference, that they lost their own warlike qualities, without acquiring either the discipline or the valour of their captors.

In many parts of the island arose strong cities, built by the Romans, and surrounded by high walls, such as Chester, Gloucester, Cirencester, and many others. Baths, temples, and villas were also built in numbers in different parts of Britain. The remains of many of these may be seen at the present day. The Romans also made roads through various parts of the island, so that their armies could move from place to place, and defend any point where danger was threatened. Wealth and luxury gradually came into Britain; and we have proofs of this in the coins and ornaments, and other matters, occasionally found in the ground in spots where the Romans once had their settlements.

The chief danger the Romans had to encounter in Britain arose from the attacks of the wild inhabitants of the regions beyond the Forth and Clyde. These people were called Picts and Scots, and were as savage and uncultivated as the Britons themselves had been before the Romans came. To keep them from pouring into Britain, two great walls were built across the island, besides a rampart of earth raised in Scotland. Along these walls castles were built at certain distances, and soldiers were posted, who lighted fires or beacons at various points, to announce to the rest when danger threatened them. While these walls were garrisoned and the coasts properly defended, there was little danger of war for the Britons. The only misfortune was, that in time they came to depend so entirely on Roman protection and Roman help that they lost all power of doing anything for themselves. And now the time came when they were to be left alone to defend themselves as they best could.

The Roman empire had been growing weaker and weaker for a long time. The descendants of those barbarians against whom Cæsar had fought with such merciless severity were gradually growing stronger, and



BOADICEA LEADING HER TROOPS.

learning the Roman method of warfare ; and the stronger they became the more fiercely were they determined upon attacking Rome itself. The emperors became alarmed at the increasing danger, and could no longer defend themselves with the troops near Rome. Therefore they determined to order some legions home who were quartered in the farther provinces of the empire ; and as Britain was the most distant province of all, it was natural that the troops in Britain should be called away first. The Roman emperors Arcadius and Honorius determined to leave Britain to its fate.

The Britons had by this time become accustomed to depend entirely on the Romans for protection, and accordingly were much alarmed and disconcerted at being thus left to shift for themselves. The Picts and Scots were not long in finding out that the Romans had departed, and renewed their incursions with greater ferocity than ever. They broke down the wall that the Romans had built to keep them out, and plundered and maltreated the defenceless Britons at their pleasure. It seems strange that barbarians like the Picts and Scots should have been able to do all this to people who were civilized, and knew so much more than they ; but strong walls and fortified cities are of no use without stout hearts to defend them ; and the Britons had lost all power of uniting for their common defence.

They applied pitifully to Rome for succour, and a legion of Roman soldiers was sent over to help them. These soldiers really did all that could be done in the matter. They rebuilt the wall of Severus, making it firm and strong. They went out against the Picts and Scots, and soon drove those barbarians back into their native woods and marshes. They exhorted the Britons to valour and union, and tried to show them that, having been so long aided, they should know how to defend themselves. Then, in the year 448, they sailed finally away from Britain, leaving the inhabitants to govern and protect themselves.

This was precisely what the Britons could not do ; and their foes the Picts and Scots knew that fact very well, and attacked them accordingly. The unhappy Britons sent a letter to CÆtius, a brave Roman general in Gaul, begging for help, and complaining that while the barbarians drove them into the sea, the sea thrust them back on the swords of the bar-



barians, so that they had only the hard choice of perishing by the sword or by the waves. But Ætius had other work to do than to send his soldiers to fight for the Britons; and for a long time those poor people were in a sad plight.

At last one of the British princes, Vortigern of Dumnonium, is said to have invited over certain warlike strangers from the continent for the protection his people. Beyond the North Sea, lived nations of hardy barbarians; rough, rude, and sunk in the depths of heathenism, but brave, warlike, and independent, and great rovers of the sea. Their princes had little authority or power, except in time of war, when every man followed his chief with the strictest obedience. Two of these chiefs came over at the summons of Vortigern. Their names were Hengist and Horsa; and with their arrival begins a new period in English history.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE SAXONS IN BRITAIN.

The Three Nations—The Heptarchy—Hengist and Horsa obtain Thanet—Vortigern—The Kingdom of Kent—Essex, Sussex, &c.—The fugitive Britons—Prince Arthur—Conversion of the Saxons to Christianity.

THERE were three nations who dwelt in the north of Germany, and especially on the coasts of Holstein and Denmark. They were all of the same race, and had the same manners and customs; therefore they are often put together under the one name of Saxons. But, properly speaking, we must divide them into Jutes, Angles, and Saxons. I am now going to tell you the story of the conquest of Britain by these nations, and of the foundation of various kingdoms in Britain—seven kingdoms being formed altogether, and called, from their number, the “Heptarchy”—a word signifying seven kingdoms.

Hengist and Horsa, the two warlike chiefs who came over to the assistance of the weak Vortigern, belonged to the nation of Jutes, whose

name is still preserved in the Danish "Jutland." The valour of these wild warriors soon put the enemies of Vortigern to flight; and as it was thought they deserved a reward, the island of Thanet in Kent was given to them. At that time Thanet was divided from the mainland by a broad arm of the sea, though now it forms part of the county, with only a narrow rivulet to mark the boundary. The island of Thanet was then, as it is still, pleasant to behold, and fertile and goodly as a dwelling-place; though there was as yet no trace of the flourishing and important towns, such as Ramsgate and Margate, which it now contains. So the chiefs who had come over with a band of followers, a small expedition of three ships, took possession of Thanet; and with their establishment in that island the great Saxon conquest began.

The news of the good fortune of Hengist and Horsa, who had thus gained a fertile island, was soon spread abroad among their countrymen. Large numbers of Jutes found their way across to Thanet; and the chiefs determined to have some more of this goodly country, if not to conquer the whole. Vortigern, it is said, married Rowena, the daughter of Hengist, being captivated by her beauty at a banquet, at which she offered the British king the great goblet of wine, with the Saxon "*Waes hael*," or, "I wish you health." This offering of the cup has been preserved in the custom of the "Wassail-bowl," which at certain festivals is handed round from guest to guest. But the unity between Vortigern and his savage visitors did not last long. The Jutes demanded more and more land, and when it was refused them, proceeded to take it by force. They were at one time beaten, and sued for peace; but at a banquet given to celebrate the granting of the peace they sought, the treacherous Hengist and his savage followers suddenly drew forth swords which they had concealed under their cloaks, and put a number of their unarmed hosts to death.

From this time, not even the appearance of friendship was kept up. Vortigern was taken prisoner, and the Jutes set about conquering the country behind the Isle of Thanet. They became masters of the whole of that district, and called it Kent. This was the first kingdom of the Heptarchy. Other chiefs very soon arrived: Saxons from the north of Germany; bold yellow-haired warriors, of lofty stature and powerful



KING ARTHUR IN BATTLE.

build, rejoicing in war and thirsting for plunder. The Saxons of the east established themselves in Essex, while Sussex fell to the *Suth Saxeani*, or Saxons of the south; and farther west the kingdom of the West Saxons, or “Wessex,” was founded. A great part of Britain gradually fell into the hands of the third nation, the Angles, who in one respect may be considered the most important, inasmuch as they gave their name to the whole country, England meaning “Angle-land,” or the land of the Angles. It must not be supposed that all these conquests were quickly achieved. A long period elapsed before the Saxon race established itself firmly—indeed, more than a hundred years—and all this while the Saxons were gradually spreading their language and their laws and customs throughout the land.

What became of the Britons who were conquered? They met with the fate that befalls every nation, when a stronger people takes away its land and reduces it to servitude. Great numbers of them were slain in the various battles. Of those that remained in England, some became the slaves of the conquerors; many retired as the foe pressed forward, and at last established themselves in the mountain fastnesses of Wales; while others took refuge in the distant wilds of Cumberland, establishing themselves from thence northward to the town in Scotland called *Dumbarton*, or *Dunbreton*, the stronghold of the Britons. Others, again, crossed the channel when all was lost, and settled in the nearest district of France, from which circumstance that province was called *Bretagne*, the country of the Britons.

The names of some of the great British heroes and princes have been chronicled in songs and poems. Thus it is told of *Vortimer*, the son of *Vortigern*, how his tomb was erected on the sea shore, that the foreign invaders whom he had vanquished in several great battles might look upon it as soon as they landed, and tremble at the recollection of their defeat.

But by far the most famous hero of this period was *Prince Arthur*, of whose greatness and wisdom a number of tales are told. It is said that he was accustomed to seat his knights at a round table, to avoid any quarrels about the different positions; and separate histories of many of the knights have been written. But most of these histories, and of the wonderful tales told concerning *Prince Arthur*, are no more true than the

adventures of Jack the Giant-Killer, or of Tom Thumb, who, by the way, is represented as having lived in high favour in Arthur's court. All that we know for a certainty concerning this famous Prince Arthur is, that he fought valiantly for his crown, and was loved by his friends and feared by his foes; and it appears that he was at last slain in battle, fighting valiantly against a rebellious nephew.

Of far more importance is the event now to be related, namely, the introduction and spreading of the true religion among the Saxons. You know that they were heathens, worshipping false gods, to whom they dedicated certain days, such as Thursday to their god Thor, and Friday to their goddess Freya. But even amid their errors they had preserved some great truths. For instance, they knew that God is good, and that man is sinful; and ignorant as they were, many among them were ready and willing to be taught better things.

One day Gregory, the then Bishop or Pope of Rome, saw some boys standing in the market-place there waiting to be sold; for in those days captives taken in war were sold into slavery. He was struck by the beauty of the poor lads, and asked who they were. On being told they were *Angli*, or Angles, he replied that if they were Christians they would be *angeli*—"angels"—and he commanded a holy man named Augustine to proceed to England, and teach the people, that they might learn the truth about God and our Saviour, His blessed Son. Augustine accordingly set out, and landed in England with forty followers, setting foot, in the year 597, in that very Isle of Thanet which had been the first habitation of the Saxons in England. Ethelbert, King of Kent, whose wife Bertha was a Christian, received Augustine and his friends kindly, and allowed them to preach to the people; and Augustine spoke so convincingly, and pointed out so clearly the truth of the Christian religion, that in a short time Ethelbert himself was converted, and became a follower of Christ. The great nobles of his kingdom soon followed his example. Churches were built at Canterbury and other towns, and the tidings of truth were spread from city to city, and from shore to shore, until the great and blessed change had been made in all England.

Everywhere the altars of the heathen gods were thrown down, and the Gospel of Christ was taught and believed in pleasant England.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE SAXON RULE.—TO THE REIGN OF ALFRED.

The Heptarchy, from A.D. 457 to A.D. 827—Egbert, first King of England—The Danes and Northmen—Description of the Danes—Their incursions—Their establishment in France—Battle of Hengesdown—Ethelwolf—Ethelbald—Ethelbert—Ethelred and Alfred—Battle of Ashdown.

WHEN several governments exist together in the same land, the end is generally that one, more powerful than the others, swallows them up and builds itself upon their ruins; and this was the case in England with the Heptarchy. Egbert, King of Wessex, a man of great skill and courage, gradually conquered the other kings, and made himself supreme ruler of England. This great event happened in the year 827; and from that year, therefore, we date the commencement of our English series of kings.

A new and great danger had begun to menace England some years before this period. This danger consisted in the incursions and ravages of the Danes; and as these Danes play a great part in the history of England, it is well that we should know who and what kind of men they were.

The name Dane or Northman was in those days given pretty generally to every inhabitant of the peninsula that forms the present countries of Sweden and Norway. These two countries, and especially the parts near the coasts, were inhabited in those days by wild and savage pirates, who were skilled in their own mode of warfare, and more cruel and keen for plunder and conquest than the Saxons had been in their darkest days of barbarism and idolatry. The Danes were heathens, as the Saxons had been. They looked upon warfare as their chief diversion, and upon plunder as the fitting reward of the perils and trials they underwent. They were bold and hardy sailors, venturing out, even in the roughest weather, upon the stormy ocean, in ships which they built and managed with great skill. Many of the chiefs called themselves sea-kings, and possessed no other property than the vessels in which they put to sea,

## INCURSIONS OF THE DANES—DEFEAT BY EGBERT—HIS DEATH.

the armour they wore, and the swift horses on which they rode, nor had they any subjects except the bold robbers who accompanied them in their forays in the hope of spoil. These pirates would suddenly appear in front of a town on or near to the sea-shore. Before a force could be brought together to oppose them, they frequently succeeded in plundering the places, mercilessly putting to death all whom they found, young or old, male or female; then collecting their plunder, they would retreat to their ships, and sail away rejoicing. By these exploits, repeated over and over again, they kept the coasts of England in a continual state of alarm and insecurity.

With success they naturally became bolder. In the year 787 they burnt a town on the coast of Dorsetshire, murdering the mayor and his attendants. This was only the first of a long series of similar exploits. Soon every coast town looked with terror, to see unfolded the great banner displaying the Danish Raven, which these devastators carried in front of their armies; and the path of the fierce Danes began to be traced by the ashes of ruined homesteads and the fragments of burnt villages all along the English shore. In 810 they had invaded France, where at last their successors managed to establish themselves; and at length, coming to England in greater numbers than ever, they boldly took the field against the powerful King Egbert himself.

But this time they had miscalculated their strength. Egbert marched out against them, and totally defeated them at Hengesdown in Devonshire. But it seemed as if the Danes could not be driven away, simply because they had nothing to lose. If ever so great a number of them were killed, fresh bands came to supply their place; and those who had been compelled to flee to their ships for safety, were sure to return in a year or two, determined to revenge themselves upon their enemies. They were without ruth or mercy, slaying priests and layman alike, and burning a convent as they would a barn. And just when it became more necessary than ever to stand up boldly against them, the brave King Egbert died, in the year 836.

Ethelwolf, who succeeded his father, had not the energy nor the ability of Egbert; but he did a good thing by giving up part of his kingdom at once to his brave son Athelstan; and this Athelstan made himself a

great name by courage and conduct against the Danes. And indeed there was fighting in plenty to do; for the fierce invaders had now established themselves in the Isle of Thanet, the first possession of the Saxons in England. Thence they sallied forth up the Thames in their ships, and burnt London. Canterbury and Rochester were likewise plundered; and the Danes, instead of going away, as was their custom, after these achievements remained in England for the winter. Victories were sometimes gained over them; but the more the Danes were slain, the more Danes seemed to come; and from this time they were never fairly driven out of England.

Ethelwolf had another cause for grief and annoyance in the latter part of his reign; and this grief must have been the more bitter as it was caused by one of his own children. Athelstan, his brave eldest son, died, and he had now four sons surviving. Their names were Ethelbald, Ethelbert, Ethelred, and Alfred. While Ethelwolf was absent on a journey to Rome, Ethelbald laid a plot with certain bishops and noblemen to deprive his father of the throne. But Ethelwolf on his return to England preferred to give up part of the kingdom to the undutiful Ethelbald, rather than enter upon a war against his own son. So he gave the kingdom of Wessex to Ethelbald.

In the year 857 King Ethelwolf died, and Ethelbald succeeded him. He had not honoured his father, as the Bible tells us to do, and certainly his days were not long in the land; for after a short reign of four years, during which the only thing recorded of him is a crime which he committed, he too died; and his next brother Ethelbert mounted the throne in 860.

The name Ethelbert is taken from two Saxon words, signifying *noble* and *illustrious*; and certainly Ethelbert behaved far more nobly than either his father or his elder brother. He bravely defended his kingdom against the Danes, who, however, made head against him, and even burned the city of Winchester. The men of Kent made a treaty with them, and sought to buy a peace by paying a large sum of money; but the treacherous Danes took the money, and then plundered and ravaged the country as if they had received nothing. And when things were at their worst, in 866, Ethelbert died.



## ETHELRED AND ALFRED DEFEAT THE DANES AT ASHDOWN.

His next brother Ethelred came to the throne in his turn, in 866, and at once found himself opposed to three Danish chieftains, Haldane, Hingwar, and Hubba, the sons of a great leader named Ragnar Lodbrok. These men landed on the east coast, and gained greater successes than the Danes had yet achieved. Ethelred and his youngest brother Alfred marched against them, and tried to stop the flood of invasion that was now pouring over the whole of England. But the Danes forced their way onward. Edmund, a brave prince of the East Angles, was taken prisoner by them, and shot to death with arrows because he would not deny his faith in Christ. For a time the tide of victory seemed to turn. At Ashdown in Berkshire, Ethelred and Alfred gained a victory over the Danes, to commemorate which their followers dug out the shape of a horse, the ensign of the Saxons, on the face of a chalky hill, where it is still to be seen. No great result, however, followed the battle of Ashdown. At Basing the Danes were victorious; and a new army came to the English shores. Ethelred died of a wound he received in a battle; and thus the whole burden of government, in the time of the greatest danger, fell upon the shoulders of the last surviving son of Ethelwolf, the young Alfred, who was now only twenty-two years of age, but who lived to save his country from the ruin that threatened it, and to earn for himself an imperishable name in history.

## CHAPTER VI.

### ALFRED THE GREAT.

Importance of Alfred's reign—Difficulties at its commencement—Strength and progress of the Danes—Alfred at Athelney—Story of the cakes—Alfred emerges from Athelney—Visits the Danish camp—Defeats the Danes—Makes a treaty with them—Makes wise laws, and rules gloriously.

THE reign of King Alfred, from 871 to 901, of which I have now to speak, is perhaps the most important in the history of England; for in this one reign we have the change from disorder to order, from a country

overrun by robbers and murderers to a realm thoroughly at peace, and completely under the control of a wise and powerful monarch. In 871; when, on the death of his brother Ethelred, Alfred was left alone to maintain his power as best he could, the Saxons were in a deplorable condition, no man's life or property being safe; in 901, when Alfred died, the nation was at peace, every man could live in comfort and security, and the evil-doer was sure to suffer his merited punishment. And all this great and happy change was due, under Heaven, to the genius and virtues of him whom historians with great reason have united in calling Alfred the Great.

For nearly eight years did Alfred contend, with untiring perseverance and dauntless valour, against the Danes, whose numerous armies were ravaging the kingdom in all directions. In one year nine great battles were fought. Sometimes Alfred gained the day, sometimes the Danes. But these barbarians seemed to be as numerous as the grains of sand on the wild sea-shore whence they came. The defeat of one band was but the signal for the arrival of another; and the wonder is, that Alfred did not altogether lose heart, and entirely give up the attempt to confront a foe so numerous and so savage. For no treaty or promise could bind these heathen Northmen; and even when they swore by what they considered most sacred, namely, the holy ring or bracelet of Odin, their god, they broke the oath as soon as they could gain any advantage by their treachery. At length, though Alfred never lost his courage, the greater number of his Saxon subjects, weary at last of the long strife, determined to yield to the invader, and to resist no more.

It was in the year 878 that Alfred was obliged at last, after a great victory gained by the Danes in Wiltshire, to retire to the little island of Athelney, in Somerset. Here, with a few faithful friends, he fortified himself as best he could, and lived for a time in comparative safety, while the Saxons and Danes alike thought he had perished. In this very island of Athelney, a jewel with Alfred's name engraven on it was found many years afterwards. For a time he was obliged to quit even this retreat, and to hide himself in the cottage of a peasant, or neat-herd, as a man who took care of oxen was then called; and here a singular adventure happened to him.



ALFRED IN THE NEAT-HERD'S COTTAGE

One evening, as Alfred was sitting in the chimney corner, mending his bows and arrows, the neat-herd's wife, who had no idea that her guest was a king in distress, desired him to watch some loaves or cakes of bread that were baking on the hearth. Alfred consented, but thinking of other matters, allowed the cakes to burn; whereupon the good wife rated him soundly for his neglect, and gave it as her opinion that he would be ready enough to eat the cakes when they were done, though he was too lazy to attend to them while they were baking. Afterwards, in happier days, when Alfred was the dreaded monarch of many thousands of vassals, he must often have smiled at the recollection of the scolding he had once received from the neat-herd's wife of Athelney.

But now a change of fortune occurred; and Alfred was not slow to avail himself of the chance which presented itself. Two great Danish chiefs, Bjorn and Hubba, were totally defeated by the men of Wessex in Devonshire, and their banner, the Raven, which they looked upon as a token of victory, fell into the hands of the Saxons. When Alfred heard this great news, he resolved to see for himself if the Danes might not now be encountered and overthrown. He disguised himself as a harper or gleeman, and went boldly into the camp of the Danes; and while the rude chieftains were rejoicing at his singing and playing, and gleefully shouting out the tunes he played, Alfred was observing them to some purpose. He saw that they had grown careless, and that they thought themselves perfectly safe; and consequently he judged that if suddenly attacked and taken unawares they might be routed. A few weeks afterwards he sallied forth from Athelney with his trusty friends, and raised his standard on the borders of Selwood Forest. When the news ran abroad among the men of Somerset, Dorset, and Hampshire, that Alfred, whom they had long considered dead, was alive and ready to lead them once more to victory, they shouted with joy, and flocked round him in great numbers; and great was the astonishment and dismay of the Danes when they heard who it was that led the army against them. At Ethandune Alfred gained a great battle, and Guthrum the Danish leader, unable to escape, and at his wits' end for provisions for himself and his men, was compelled soon after to submit himself with his whole army to the clemency of the Saxon king.



ALFRED IN THE DANISH CAMP.

And now Alfred showed himself a really great man. He saw that the Danes were too numerous to be driven entirely from England; and he determined, therefore, to make peaceful subjects of them, and to give them a part of England in which to live, on condition that they submitted to him as their king and promised obedience to his laws. Accordingly he made a peace with Guthrum, and afterwards with Guthred, another Danish king, giving them a portion of England, along the eastern coasts, which was to be called the Danelaw, and where these chiefs were to rule, with Alfred as their sovereign; and as a condition, he insisted that Guthrum and Guthred should be baptized and become Christians. They were glad to consent; and from this time the Danes who thus settled in England often did good service against the wild barbarians who came from abroad; for they had now towns and fields and villages of their own in England to defend. Both Guthrum and Guthred remained true to Alfred; and the Danes in general, except perhaps those in Northumbria, were obedient and peaceable.

And now that the country, which had for many years been harassed by war, had at last achieved peace, King Alfred turned his attention to improving the laws and the government. He divided the whole country into counties, and hundreds, and tithings, and took care that proper officers were appointed to do justice among his subjects. When a judge gave an unjust sentence, and it came to Alfred's ears, he always punished the offender with great severity. He did not try to introduce many new laws, which would have been regarded with suspicion and dislike by the people; but he revived the good old regulations which had fallen into disuse in the troublous times of the Danish wars. Thus, trial of all offenders by jury, or by twelve men sworn to do justice, and a regulation called *frank-pledge*, which made each community of ten men liable to deliver up any one of their number who committed an offence, were revived, not introduced, by Alfred. But the true value of this good king's laws and regulations lay in the fact that he himself was a true and consistent Christian. Above his own laws, as his model and guide, he placed the Ten Commandments and other precepts to be found in that unerring book of laws—the Bible. "Do these," said the great king, "and if these be obeyed, no other law-book will be required."

During the latter years of Alfred's reign, after the death of Guthrum and Guthred, the Danes again began to molest the English. Again the fleets of the heathen Northmen hovered upon the coasts, intent upon war and pillage. Hasting, a wild Danish leader, collected a great fleet of two hundred and fifty ships, landed in Kent, and fortified himself there. Alfred called out his army in divisions, and managed to get the better of Hasting, whose wife and children he once took prisoners; but the generous king sent them back to the Danish chieftain. Hasting, however, did not seem to be moved by this kindness on Alfred's part, but carried on the war more mercilessly than ever.

Into the very heart of England marched the savage Danes, and took up their quarters in the deserted old Roman city of Chester. It was with great difficulty that Alfred prevented them from taking and plundering London itself. He contrived, however, to oppose them to such good purpose that Hasting at last sailed away, and came back to England no more. And Alfred, to secure his people against new attacks, built a fleet of larger and better ships than the Saxons had ever yet possessed, and took care to engage some skilful foreign sailors, to teach his own men what they did not yet know concerning the management of these vessels.

On one occasion we are told that King Alfred acted harshly towards a conquered enemy. In a battle on the south coast of England, his new ships had gained the victory, and the crews of two Danish vessels fell as captives into the hands of the English. The prisoners were brought before Alfred at Winchester; and the king, looking upon them as robbers and enemies of all men, caused the entire number to be hanged. Now, this may appear very hard and merciless on Alfred's part; but we must remember how he had been fighting all his life long against the Danes; how often he had treated them with forbearance and kindness; and how they had in almost every case returned him evil for good, and treachery for trust. That his sentence was a hard one cannot be denied; but Alfred had so often tried indulgence, that we cannot very much blame him for once trying what severity would do.

I have not space here to tell you of the learning of Alfred, or many of the good things he did for England. Of these you will read full

accounts when you are older ; and I will engage to say, that the more you read of Alfred, the greater will be your admiration for him. When he died in 901, after a glorious and most useful reign of twenty-nine years, he had laid the foundation of the greatness of our country, by wise and valiant rule ; and he fully deserves the titles bestowed upon him by the old chroniclers and historians, who rightly named him “the wisest man of his time, and the darling of the English people.”

## CHAPTER VII.

### ALFRED'S SUCCESSORS.—KING CANUTE AND HIS SONS.

Edward the Elder, A.D. 901—925—Athelstane, 925—941—Battle of Brunanburgh—Edmund, 941—945—Edred, 945—955—Edwy, 955—959—Bishop Dunstan—Edgar the Peaceable, 959—975—Edgar's Power and Wealth—Edward the Martyr, 975—978—Ethelred the ready, 978—1016—Canute, 1017—1035—Harold Harefoot, 1035—1039—Hardicanute, 1039—1041.

I CAN only say a very few words about the successors of Alfred, as we have to speak of some important kings presently. Edward, called The Elder, the son of Alfred, came to the throne on his father's death. Ethelwald, his cousin, tried to take the kingdom from him, but Edward managed not only to keep the English throne, but to make himself greatly respected alike by Danes, Scots, and Britons in the outskirts of his empire. His sister Ethelfleda, called the “Lady of Mercia,” was very useful to him by her counsel and aid. Athelstane, the son and successor of Edward, extended his authority over the Britons of part of Wales, and gained the great battle of Brunanburgh over an army of invading Danes and Scots, led on by a chief named Anlaf: he was a wise and generous prince. Edmund, the younger brother of Athelstane, who came to the throne in 941, conquered Northumbria, the part of England north of the Humber, and established his power there. Edred, the next king, was obliged to reconquer Northumbria, which stood up for a time against him ; and he decided that there should no longer be a



king reigning in Northumbria, but that an earl or nobleman should keep the people in order.

In the reign of another king, Edwy, a clever but cruel monk, named Dunstan, became very famous. The people had a great respect for this Dunstan, thinking him a holy man; and Dunstan was very clever as a worker in metals, and made many useful things. But he treated the young King Edwy, and the king's wife Elgiva, very badly; and when the king sent him away as a punishment, the revengeful Dunstan persuaded some of Edwy's subjects to rise up against their master, headed by an archbishop named Odo. Elgiva was killed, and Edwy's kingdom was given to Edgar his brother.

In the reign of this monarch, the power of the Anglo-Saxon rulers reached its height. The wily Dunstan, who had now been made an archbishop, was his chief counsellor. He was a clever man, in spite of all his faults, and taught the young Edgar to govern England prosperously and well. His reign was more peaceful than that of any king who had reigned before him; and therefore he is called Edgar the Pacific. So great was his power, that on one occasion he had eight kings, all subject to him, to row his barge upon the river Dee. The Welsh princes also were under his authority: Edgar made them pay a tribute of three hundred wolves' heads every year, because he wished to destroy those savage creatures throughout the whole of the island.

When Edgar died, in 975, he left two sons, Edward and Ethelred. Elfrida, the mother of Ethelred, was still alive, and wished her son to succeed; but Dunstan managed matters in such a way that Edward was chosen. But the wicked Elfrida caused Edward to be murdered as he was drinking a cup of wine at her castle-gate; and then Ethelred mounted the throne.

He was called Ethelred the Unready; for when the Danes, who now began once more to make incursions into England, appeared on the coasts, he was never ready to receive them. They took Southampton, they burned London; and when at length the council or *Witan* met to concert measures to resist them, Ethelred yielded to the cowardly advice that they should be bought with money. Naturally the Danes took the money and departed, and then came back for more. Another equally

cowardly and more cruel measure of Ethelred's was the murder of a number of peaceable Danes who dwelt in England. Among those who were thus slain was Gunhilda, sister of Sweyne, King of Denmark; and it is not to be wondered at that Sweyne brought an army to England, to avenge his sister's death. From this massacre, in 1002, till Ethelred's death sixteen years after, the weak king never had a moment's peace. Sweyne established himself in England, and when he died, some time before Ethelred, he left his power to his son Canute; and at length, after the death of Ethelred's son Edmund Ironside, Canute the Dane became the sole King of England.

He was a wise and powerful ruler, this Canute, and he governed the English better than many of their native kings had done. As he grew older his fierceness left him, and he ruled with justice and kindness, as the following anecdote will show:—In a moment of passion he slew a soldier; and such was his sense of justice that he assembled his troops, came down from his throne, and having expressed his repentance for the rash act, demanded they should punish him; ultimately he fined himself three hundred and sixty talents, and then added nine talents more as a further compensation.

It is told of him that one day at Southampton, his courtiers were flattering him, and calling him King of the Sea. Canute thereupon commanded them to place his throne close to the margin of the water, while the tide was rising; and sitting down, he bade the sea retire. Of course the waves would not hearken to his voice; and as they rolled around his feet, Canute turned to his courtiers, and bade them remark that there was only One who could say to the waves of the sea, "Thus far shall ye come, and no farther." And we are told that after this adventure, he refused to wear his crown, but sent it to the Cathedral of Winchester; where he himself was afterwards buried, at his death in 1035.

Two more Danish kings reigned in England after Canute. These were his two sons, Harold Harefoot and Hardicanute. Neither of these men did anything good or great for England; and the last of them, Hardicanute, died in 1042, in consequence of drinking too much mead and wine at a banquet.



CANUTE REPROVING HIS COURTIERS.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE LAST OF THE SAXON KINGS.

Godwin Earl of Kent—He restores the Saxon line—Dissensions in the Royal Family—Banishment of Earl Godwin and his Sons—Edward the Outlaw—Edgar Atheling—William of Normandy and Harold intrigue for the Throne—Death of the Confessor—Harold made King—William prepares to invade England—Battle of Stamford Bridge—Battle of Hastings.

WHEN Hardicanute closed his short ignoble reign with a drunkard's death, and no son of Canute was left to succeed to the English throne, the people began to hope that a descendant of their beloved Alfred might yet wear the crown; and Godwin, Earl of Kent, a very powerful nobleman, put himself at the head of the Saxon party. Edward, the son of Ethelred the Unready, was living in Normandy, a province in France. He had been educated at the court of the Norman duke whose nephew he was; for Ethelred had married Emma, the Duke of Normandy's sister. Godwin now invited Edward to England, and by means of the power he possessed placed him on the throne; and thus was the Saxon line of kings restored.

But Edward was not a king fit to rule in those times, or indeed in any times at all. He was weak and timid, always trusting to others rather than to himself; and his long residence in Normandy had made him feel like a stranger in England. He married Edith, the daughter of the great Earl Godwin, but they had no children; and although Edward owed the throne of England to the energy of Godwin and his brave sons, he never took kindly to them, and was always governed by certain Norman favourites, and by the priests and monks, who praised him for his piety, and gave him the title of The Confessor or Saint.

It is bad for a family, and it is bad for a kingdom, when the members are divided into two sides, each jealous and distrustful of the other; and England was thus divided at the time of which I write. Godwin and his sons, who had placed Edward on the throne, detested the Normans whom Edward had brought with him, and the Normans, on their part,

hated Godwin and his sons, who had also by their arrogance made enemies of many of the northern earls. Godwin and his sons were even banished from England, but they returned with an army, and compelled the weak Edward to make peace with them. Soon after Godwin died.

Edward the Confessor was now growing old; and as he had no children, it was necessary to settle who should be king after his death. The next heir to the throne was a prince called Edward the Outlaw, a son of Edmund Ironside, then living in the distant country of Hungary; and Edward the Confessor summoned this prince to England. But Edward the Outlaw died soon after his arrival in England, leaving only one son, Edgar Atheling, who was quite young and foolish, and unfit to reign.

There were two men each of whom hoped that he himself should wear the royal crown of England: one was William the young Duke of Normandy, cousin to Edward the Confessor; the other was Harold, the second son of the great Earl Godwin, a brave and handsome man, well beloved of the Saxons in England, and feared and hated by the Norman party. William came to England to pay a visit to his friend, King Edward; and during this visit he obtained from the weak king a promise that the English crown should be his. Some time after, Harold went to Normandy to visit William, and to obtain the release of some friends who were in the Norman duke's power; and here William made Harold swear a solemn oath, not to oppose him in any way in taking possession of the throne. Harold returned to England full of rage and anger; for he considered that the oath had been unjustly obtained from him, and he was more than ever determined to have the crown in spite of all that the ambitious and crafty Norman could say or do. Matters stood thus when the feeble-minded king was attacked by the sickness which ended his life. As he lay dying, he was persuaded to name Harold as his successor; and then, on the 5th of January, 1066, he breathed his last in his palace of Westminster, close by the grand abbey which he had rebuilt, and wherein the great oak coffin which contains his ashes is still to be seen.

Harold now took measures to get himself acknowledged king by the prelates and nobles at Westminster; but only a part of England

acknowledged his title, for he had only the dying words of the Confessor on which to base his claim, while the young Edgar Atheling was the undoubted heir according to law. Edgar was too poor and weak to be very dangerous; but far otherwise was the case with the proud Norman duke. The moment the news of Edward's death and of Harold's assumption of the crown was brought to William, that bold man determined to march against the traitor Harold, and conquer by force of arms the realm which he could not peaceably obtain. He began his preparations at once. He persuaded not only his own nobles of Normandy, but a host of foreigners, to join him by lavish promises of reward. Every one who gave assistance to the undertaking should have a part of the conquered land for himself. Even bishops did not hesitate to equip men-at-arms, and to furnish swords and shields, horses and ships, for the conquest of England; and every poor and discontented man who could wield a sword, and who had nothing to lose at home, thought he might avail himself of the chance of gaining something abroad. The Pope Alexander gave his approval to the enterprise, and sent a banner to be carried in the cause of war and bloodshed; and Matilda, the wife of William, presented to her husband a fine ship with purple sails, in which William himself was to cross the sea from Normandy to England.

Harold, on his part, made every preparation to encounter the Norman invader; but first he had to march northward to encounter another foe. Tostig, a brother of his own, who had been banished, had prevailed on Harold Hardrada, King of Norway, to invade England from the north. He refused all Harold's offers to settle their disputes, and Harold had to meet him in battle at Stamford Bridge. Tostig and Hardrada were both slain, and Harold gained a victory, dearly purchased by the death of many of his best men. And now he heard the news that William had landed with a great army on the coast of Sussex. He at once marched southward with his tired troops, resolved to conquer or die. It was on the evening of the 13th of October, 1066, that the hostile armies came in sight of each other. The Saxons seem to have been overconfident, and passed the night in drinking and carousing; while the Normans prayed, and solemnly prepared for the great fight that was soon to commence.



FINDING THE BODY OF HAROLD.

## BATTLE OF HASTINGS—THE CONQUEST.

Next morning, the 14th of October, the battle began. Both Harold and William fought right bravely, and it is hard to say whether Saxons or Normans showed the greater valour. The best weapons of the Normans were their excellent bows and arrows; while the Saxons dealt tremendous blows with their heavy axes. At one time it seemed as if the Normans must be beaten, and William had his horse killed under him. A trick of the Norman duke's now turned the fortune of the day. He ordered some of his men to pretend to fly; and the Saxons, thinking the day was their own, rushed out with broken ranks to pursue the flying foe. But at a given signal the Normans turned, and just then an arrow pierced the eye of Harold, who fell dead on the plain. This decided the fortune of the fight. The English fought on till it became too dark to see their foes. A great pile of corpses surrounded the place where the body of Harold was afterwards found; and that night, when the Norman duke retired to his tent, around which lay for many a rood the dying and the dead, he knew that he had won the great prize for which he fought, and that he was King of England.



## PART II. THE NORMAN KINGS.

### CHAPTER I.

#### WILLIAM I. (THE CONQUEROR.)

Effects of the Battle of Hastings—William's promises—Revolt of the Saxons—Barbarous punishment—Wretched state of the conquered—The New Forest—Forest Laws—The Curfew.

WE have now come to an unhappy period in the history of England; a period heavy with the sighs and groans of a whole people; a time



when oppression and wrong took the place of right and justice, and rapine and devastation made a desert of many parts of pleasant England. A conquered people must always expect to suffer hardships; but very seldom has a conquest been attended with misery so terrible to the vanquished as was the wretchedness that accompanied the settlement of the Normans in England, and the establishment of the *feudal system*.

What this feudal system was, and how it was established, I hope to explain to you in this and the following chapters.

With the battle of Hastings, the hopes of the Saxons ended. Broken into scattered bands, and without a leader, they had little chance of being able to stand against the power of the Normans; and the recent government of the Danish kings among them had taught them to look upon a foreign ruler with an indifference which their ancestors would have been far from feeling. William, therefore, had little difficulty in making his way to London, where he was crowned in the abbey of Westminster on Christmas Day, in the year 1066. On this solemn occasion William promised that he would rule his new kingdom with justice and mercy; that every Saxon should be *law worthy*, or under the protection of the law; and that every man should succeed to his father's goods after his father's death. This sounded well; and many Saxons who were present showed their joy and approval by shouts. Unfortunately, the Norman knights mistook the meaning of these shouts, and a tumult ensued, which all William's efforts could scarcely calm.

At first it really seemed as if William intended to carry out his promise of treating the conquered nation with justice and kindness. But he was quickly called to Normandy, to settle affairs of importance there; and while he was away many of the Saxons rose in revolt.

They were not able to effect much; for they were scattered over a great extent of country: there was never any union among them, and not one of the separate bands knew what the rest were doing. Edgar Atheling, the weak young Saxon heir to the throne, upon whom many hopes were centred, made some feeble attempts more than once to assert his claims; but he never effected anything, nor did William ever look upon him as a dangerous enemy. The sons of Harold rose against William in one part of the kingdom, the great Earls Edwin and Morcar

in another; and the names of many Saxons are recorded as having offered a courageous resistance to the Norman conquerors. But all was in vain. The revolts which succeeded each other, but which were never undertaken in concert, only aroused hatred and anger in the hearts of the Normans; and at last King William, in a fit of rage, marched northwards with an army, and laid the whole of the country between the rivers Humber and Tees, a district of sixty miles in breadth, entirely waste and desolate. Every inhabitant who showed himself in this wretched district was put to death; every house and every cottage was utterly destroyed; and the historians of the time speak of the horrible sight presented by the dead bodies of men, women, and children, strewn about over the desolate land, with no one to bury them.

The treatment endured by the poor Saxons throughout all England was disgracefully barbarous and cruel. Every Norman who had come over with Duke William, demanded the property of a certain number of Saxons, much as each man in a band of robbers might demand his share of the spoil. Rude grooms and horse-boys, cooks and scullions, demanded to have the estates of ancient Saxon families given over to them; and as William had paid the expenses of his expedition to England only in promises of land, he was obliged to make his words good. Where the estates belonged to Saxon maidens or widows, the poor women were compelled to marry Normans, whom they perhaps detested as the enemies of their country; for by such marriages the estates became the property of the husbands. And as the Saxons were unable to resist these oppressions, they were laughed and jeered at by the insulting Normans, who used them worse and worse every year. Even where a Saxon kept a house in which he could dwell with his family there was no safety for him. The Normans might break in at any time, from mere love of mischief and cruelty, and do him and his family an injury; and all he could do was to have strong bolts on the doors, and to defend himself, if his house was attacked, as he would have defended his life against a band of thieves. Thus the Saxons were in a wretched condition—robbed, oppressed, and without a defender to take their part. A great number of them left England altogether, and served as soldiers in foreign countries; others escaped into the marshes and forests, and lived there as best they could, by hunting,



CORONATION OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

and sometimes by attacking and plundering the Normans when they could get a chance. A hundred thousand had perished in that one cruel expedition of William to the north; and the rest sank into a condition of miserable servitude. And now there was a terrible famine, or scarcity of food, because the fields and gardens had been trampled down, and the oxen and cattle killed and carried off; and many poor Saxons were obliged to sell themselves as slaves to their conquerors, merely that they might have food to support their wretched lives. These were some of the horrors caused by the great Norman Conquest; but it would fill every page of this book to tell them all.

King William did nothing to better the condition of his miserable subjects. Grasping and tyrannical, he thought only of his own interests, and so long as he could heap up money, and become master of fresh land, it mattered little to him who suffered injustice or wrong. He was very fond of hunting; and, not content with the forests that already existed in England, he resolved to plant a new one. In making this "New Forest" in the county of Hampshire, a space of many miles was cleared of houses by the short method of turning out the Saxon inhabitants of sixty parishes and pulling down their houses. William also forbade the people to hunt the deer and other animals; and very cruel punishments were inflicted on all who were found by the king's keepers, or *verdurers*, as they were called, in pursuit of game. A writer who lived in William's time tells us, "He ordered that whoever should kill a stag or a hind should have his eyes picked out: the protection given to stags extended also to wild boars; and he even made statutes to secure hares from all danger. This king loved wild beasts," adds the old chronicler, "as if he had been their father. The poor murmured, but he made no account of their ill-will, and they were fain to obey under pain of death."

William is also said to have introduced the *curfew* rule; but it seems that the curfew enactments existed before his time, and had been introduced to guard against danger from fire in a time when nearly all houses were built of wood. The curfew or "cover fire" bell was rung in every town and village at sundown; and all householders were obliged when they heard it to put out their fires and lanterns. There was an instru-

## THE FEUDAL SYSTEM.

ment, something like a dish-cover in shape, which was placed like an extinguisher over the hot ashes on the hearth, and this was called a curfew.

### CHAPTER II.

#### THE END OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR'S REIGN.

The Feudal System—Its harshness towards the People—Quarrels among the Conqueror's Sons—Rebellion of Robert—Great assembly of William's Vassals—War with France—William's Death and Burial.

THE most important thing in the reign of William the Conqueror was the introduction of the "feudal system" into England. William brought it from Normandy.

And now we will see what this "feudal system" was.

It was a way of governing a country by giving, or rather lending, different portions of land to various people, on condition that they did certain service in return. For instance, when William had conquered England, the whole of the land belonged to him, however violently and unjustly he had gained it. Now this land was all parcelled out into manors; and indeed a great book was prepared, called Domesday Book, or the "Book of Judgment," in which all the land in England was inscribed, generally divided into estates or manors. Fifteen hundred manors William kept for himself. The rest he gave to his chief companions and followers, in various portions; and each of these portions was called a *fief*. This fief was to be held by the person to whom it had been confided, and by that person's successors, so long as they rendered service to the king in return for it. In war-time each holder of a fief was bound to join the king's army with a certain number of armed men; and the larger the fief, the more men had the holder to furnish. The holder of the fief, on his part, gave portions of it to friends of his own, who were obliged in return to serve him; and this rule by service in

return for land, not *given* but *lent*, was what we call the feudal system, and the Germans the loan system (*lehen* system).

Now this was all very pleasant for the king who had land to give away, and for the barons and vassals who received it. But the bulk of the people who lived on the land were not thought of at all in the matter. The Saxons were generally reduced to the condition of serfs or slaves; and even those who were still called freemen, were quite at the mercy of the holders of fiefs, who could treat them much as they chose. So we are for instance told of one Ivo de Taillebois, to whom the Conqueror gave a large fief, and who used to kill the cattle of the people on his land, and destroy their crops, and do them all kinds of mischief, merely from malice and in wanton cruelty. An oppressive rule for the poor was feudalism.

It may be supposed, now that the Saxons were utterly subdued, and the Conqueror everywhere acknowledged as lord paramount in England, with wealth as much as heart could desire, and dominions wider than his ancestors had dreamed of possessing, that William was a happy man. But he was not. He sat moody and stern, in the midst of his lords and prelates, anxious for the future, and perhaps in his secret soul dissatisfied with the past. The conduct of his own children too, and especially that of his eldest son Robert, became a source of grief and anxiety to him; and it seemed that he who had gained his great power by means of bloodshed and war, was to be involved in strife and quarrels to the end of his days. This Robert, partly excited by the wilfulness of youth, and partly impelled by the advice of his friends, imagined himself slighted by the king, in a foolish quarrel which had occurred between himself and his brothers William and Henry, who had thrown water at him from a window. He leagued himself with some discontented barons, and demanded either a portion of England or the dukedom of Normandy from the king; and when William argued kindly with him, Robert undutifully replied that he came to demand his rights, and not to listen to sermons. Thereupon he left William's court in a rage, and absolutely gathered together a number of men, to make war upon his own father. It was in Normandy, in the castle of Gerberoy, that Robert shut himself up to oppose his father.



NORMAN CASTLE.—HUNTING SCENE.

Justly angry at this conduct of Robert's, William proceeded himself to Normandy with an army, to chastise his rebellious son, who had moreover been aided and encouraged in his opposition by William's wife Matilda. One day Robert found himself opposed in fight to a knight whom he overthrew and wounded in the arm; but hearing the voice of the fallen champion, he found that it was his own father whom he had nearly slain. He was shocked and ashamed, and after a time made submission and was pardoned; but the quarrel broke out afresh, and Robert went away from his father for the last time, the angry king cursing him in the bitterness of his heart as he rode away. Robert's subsequent life was very unfortunate; and the old historians declare that the misfortunes that befell him were a judgment upon him for his disobedient and undutiful conduct towards his father.

William's wealth and power appear forcibly in the fact of the great meeting of his vassals, or of the men holding land from him, which he summoned in the year 1086. No fewer than sixty thousand came, and each of these had land enough to keep a horse or to provide a complete suit of armour. But all this splendour went side by side with great and terrible misery. The Norman landholder ruled over a rich domain, prosperous and free from taxes. The Saxon, to whom it had been accorded as a great favour to hold a farm, was heavily and unjustly burdened. The Norman part of the population furnished courtiers, knights, warriors, and nobles, living in idleness, and amusing themselves with chivalrous games and tournaments. Saxon families of ancient birth, and once of high rank, now dwelt in thatched cottages, that seemed to hide themselves away in the woods from the proud Norman castles; and the dwellers in these hovels had sunk to be poor artificers and peasants. A writer telling of these things long afterwards, speaks of the Norman Conquest as the "memory of sorrow."

And now William, whose proud spirit had been chafed by the French King Philip's foolish jest upon his fatness, determined to invade France. In the pleasant month of July, when the land was smiling with corn and with laden fruit trees, the ruthless king ordered his horsemen to trample down the wheat fields and cut down the trees; and coming to the town of Nantes, he commanded them to burn it. As the flames



## DEATH OF WILLIAM I.—WILLIAM RUFUS.

rose up from steeple and tower, William rode to and fro in the streets, rejoicing in his vengeance, and shouting to encourage his men in their work of destruction. But his punishment was at hand. In the midst of his triumph, his horse suddenly stumbled over some hot embers, and seriously injured its rider. Humbled at last, and seemingly contrite, the Conqueror was carried to Rouen, and laid in a monastery outside the city. He grew rapidly worse, and now, at the eleventh hour, tried to make a little amends for the wrongs he had done. He sent money to England for the poor, pardoned some of his enemies whom he had kept in prison, and promised to rebuild the burnt churches at Nantes. But his time was come—he was to die; and the memory of one good deed would avail him more than all the wealth he had amassed through years of wrong and bloodshed. He made a last disposition of his worldly goods. To his son Robert he left Normandy; he expressed a wish that William, his second son, should succeed him in England; and to Henry, the youngest, he gave a large sum of money. Robert was absent at the time; and William and Henry left their dying father, the first departing to get crowned in England, the other to procure payment of his legacy. And thus, alone and neglected, the Conqueror died, on the 10th of September, 1087.

## CHAPTER III.

### WILLIAM II.

Accession of William—Discontent of the Normans—The Saxons called to fight—Treaty with Robert of Normandy—Rebellion of Robert de Mowbray—Tyranny of the King—Last incursion of the Northmen—The first Crusade.

WHEN Prince William left his father to die alone in the monastery of Rouen, he made what speed he could towards the coast, for he was anxious to cross to England without delay. He knew that Robert, his elder brother, was beloved by the Norman nobles, and that he himself was hated; therefore it was important that he should get to England first,

and if possible get himself proclaimed king, and procure the oaths of submission of the nobles, before his brother had time to take any steps against him. At the little town of Ushant he received the news that his father was dead. Then he crossed the Channel, and hastened to Winchester, where he took possession of the royal treasure. King William the First had extorted vast sums from his conquered subjects, for William found sixty thousand pounds of silver and a quantity of gold and jewels at Winchester. Then he hastened on to London, assembled what Norman barons he could bring together, and was crowned King of England in the abbey of Westminster by the title of William the Second. In history he is generally known as William Rufus, or *the Red*, from the colour of his hair.

At this time a great many of the Norman barons were absent in France. They would greatly have preferred Robert to William as their king, and were angry at the manner in which William had outwitted them by his sudden seizure of the crown. They determined to dethrone him and set up Robert on the throne of England. When William saw the Normans preparing to fight against him, he considered that it would be very useful to have the English on his side. Therefore he summoned his Saxon subjects to his aid, and promised them the liberty to carry weapons and the right of hunting, and for a time took the burden of taxes off their shoulders. The Saxons, on their part, regained all their old warlike spirit now that there was a chance of a good fight. They flocked right willingly to the standard of William, and in a short time the attempt to dethrone William, aided by Odo, Bishop of Bayeux (there were many fighting bishops in those days), was totally defeated, and Odo considered himself fortunate in being allowed to quit England in disgrace.

The two brothers soon came to an understanding. It was agreed between them that each should keep what he had—Robert, Normandy, and William, England; and whichever brother died first should leave his possessions to the survivor. And now that the danger had passed away, King William thought proper to break all the promises he had made to the Saxons. He treated them just as badly as his father had done, and by his faithlessness and ingratitude made himself hated by all

of them. Still, the very fact that they had been necessary to the king to support his claim was of some use to them, and gradually the English began to be of some consequence in the country again.

In those days, the king was the only person who had a right to hunt in the forests of England. Even the Norman nobles were debarred from that privilege; and so angry did they become on the subject, that certain of them rebelled against William in 1094, headed by Robert de Mowbray, Earl of Northumberland. King William marched against the earl, who was taken by William's troops, and kept in prison; and those who had helped him were sent away from England. The people who lived on the lands of these banished noblemen had to pay heavy taxes to the king; and William spared no man's farm, workshop, or warehouse, where he could extort anything. He also compelled a number of Saxons to work for him in constructing part of the Tower of London, which had been begun by his father the Conqueror; and near Westminster Abbey he built a great hall for the assemblies of his barons. This structure, the famous Westminster Hall, is still standing, and many great meetings have been held therein.

William governed, or rather misgoverned England in a very "rough and ready" fashion, and set a bad example to his barons and retainers, who imitated him only too readily. His idea seems to have been that he was the master of the English, and therefore that they must do whatever he chose to order, and give him whatever he thought fit to demand. In the journeys he sometimes undertook through England, his servants and companions completely plundered the country through which he passed. They took all the provisions, and wine, and ale they could find in the English houses; and what they could not eat they either sold in the markets for their own profit or wantonly destroyed. The red king never thought that it was his duty, as ruler of the kingdom, to guard his subjects, one and all, from insult and outrage. He was almost as savage and ferocious as the heathen Danes of old; and no wonder, therefore, that when the news of the king's approach came, the people for the most part ran away into the woods, and remained there till he and his court were gone, hiding from their liege lord's court as they would from any other set of robbers. He was especially severe in punishing any offence

against the forest laws, and the people found a sort of consolation in abusing him—in his absence, of course—and calling him the “forest keeper,” and the “wild beast-herd.” But, after all, this did not help them much.

So time passed on, without bringing any great change in the aspect of England. And now the north of Europe, Sweden and Norway, had become more civilized, and the chiefs left off their piratical excursions. The last attempt of the kind occurred in the reign of William Rufus. Magnus, King of Norway, came with a fleet to the island of Anglesea; but a great earl marched out with his men against the invader, and drove him away; and after that the English saw no more of the Northern pirates.

We must now turn for a short time to William’s brother, Robert of Normandy, for he will appear again in the history of the next reign. In 1095 a great undertaking was begun in Europe—nothing less than the attempt to take the Holy Land, where our Saviour lived and worked His miracles, from the heathen Saracens, who had possessed it for some hundreds of years. It had always been a custom for people to make journeys to the Holy Land, especially to visit Jerusalem, where our Lord lived and died; and these journeyings were called pilgrimages, and considered as highly meritorious. When the Saracens began to ill-treat and molest the pilgrims, a French monk, called Peter the Hermit, went through Europe declaring to all people, high and low, that it would be a good thing to march to the Holy Land and take the country, and especially Jerusalem, from its cruel oppressors. The Pope at Rome gave his full approval to the design; and many of the princes and nobles of Europe, who were fond of fighting and adventure, caught eagerly at the idea of conquering the Holy Land, and prepared to start for the East with a great number of armed men. They wore on their left shoulder a cross, in token that they were going to fight in the name of Him who had died on the cross to save all mankind from everlasting death; and the enterprise itself was called a *crusade*. There were no fewer than seven of these crusades undertaken at different times. The one of which I am now speaking was the first, and ended in 1099, when Jerusalem was captured by the Crusaders.



Now, Robert of Normandy wished to take part in this great action, for he was a brave man. He required money to buy what was necessary for himself and the numerous troop of followers at whose head he was to set forth. Accordingly, he applied to his brother King William, and offered to pawn or pledge Normandy to him for the sum of ten thousand marks. William, who was, doubtless, glad of the opportunity of increasing his dominions, had only to be a little more extortionate than usual to wring this sum from the people and the clergy. Robert received his ten thousand marks, and started for the East; and England heard nothing more of him for some years.

William took possession of Normandy, and the province of Maine in France; but these new dominions brought trouble and disquietude for him. His new subjects were not disposed to accept him for their ruler, and the French king especially did him all possible harm. A brave knight named Heli de la Fleche offered his services to William, who was foolish enough to make him an insulting reply. From this time Heli became the greatest enemy of the English king; and William was obliged to go over to France in a great hurry to combat him. The Duke of Guienne, another French nobleman, who wished, like Robert of Normandy, to start for the Holy Land, and who again, like Robert, was in want of money, offered to pledge his provinces to William for a sum of money; and William, glad of a proposal which would bring him land, while his subjects would have to pay the price, made great preparations to go to France and conclude the bargain, when suddenly his career of cruelty and rapine was ended by a violent death.

It was in the year 1100, the month was July, the season of plenty and sunshine, in which, thirteen years before, the Conqueror had ridden to his grave over the ashes of Nantes, that the Red King determined to enjoy the sport of hunting in that New Forest which had been laid out at the expense of a certain amount of Saxon misery. But now an event happened which put an end to all his schemes. While he was thinking of gaining fresh possessions, he was suddenly summoned away, like the unjust steward whose lord called him to give an account of his stewardship, for he was to be steward no longer.

William was as fond of hunting as his father had been; and before



DEATH OF WILLIAM RUFUS.  
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starting for France he resolved to enjoy this sport once more in the forest that his father made on the place where the Saxon villages had once stood. He set out from Winchester with a large train of courtiers and servants about him, little thinking that the sun which shone so brightly through the green trees of the forest had risen upon him for the last time. An especial favourite of the king's, a Frenchman named Walter Tyrrel, hunted with him on that day; and the king's huntsmen ran out, according to their custom, to chase the deer from their covert, that the king and his companions might shoot at the game as it ran by. Suddenly a large stag started up, just between the king and Tyrrel, who were both standing ready with crossbow in hand. The king shot at the stag, and missed. Then he called upon Tyrrel to shoot. The favourite obeyed. The bow twanged as the arrow flew from the string, and the next moment the king suddenly sank down on the green sward—dead. An arrow had pierced his breast: whether it was Tyrrel's, or had been shot by another marksman, was never known. As for Tyrrel, when he saw what had happened, and found that the king was dead, he became alarmed for his own safety, and mounted his horse and started for the sea coast: there he found a boat, and passed over at once into Normandy. We are told that from thence he went to fight in the Holy Land against the Saracens.

He had no friends, this tyrannical and cruel Red King; and when he was dead, the courtiers who had surrounded him in the morning with smiles and flattery, rode off, one and all, and left him lying in the forest alone. Presently some woodcutters came by with their cart, and found the corpse of the great Conqueror's son lying stark and stiff. They put it in their cart, wrapped in some rags which happened to be at hand; and thus, without one mourner to weep for him, the dead king was brought back to Winchester. His life had been selfish, violent, and cruel; and in his death he was left uncared for and alone. He was the second of the Conqueror's sons who had been killed in the New Forest, and his nephew, son of Duke Robert, afterwards perished there also. When the Saxons talked of these deaths, in their smoky cottages, they said that the judgment of God had found out the Norman Conqueror's family, in the very place which had been made by his tyranny.



## CHAPTER IV.

### A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE CRUSADES.

The origin of the Crusades—The First Crusade—Taking of Jerusalem—Second Crusade, undertaken by Louis VII. and Conrad III.—Third Crusade, by Frederic Barbarossa, Richard I., and Philip Augustus—Fourth Crusade—Constantinople taken—The last Crusades—St. Louis of France—His death.

AS THE Crusades are often mentioned in English History, it is right that my readers should know something about them. I will therefore devote this chapter to giving a short account of these wars, showing when they took place and what was done in each.

The Crusades were undertaken, as I have already observed, to win back the Holy Land from the Saracens, who did not know or worship the Saviour. These wars were all approved of by the Pope, who was considered as the head of the Church in those days; and the priests who excited the princes and people to take up arms and fight in the Holy Land, to drive out the Saracens, had the full permission, and even the command, of the Pope for what they said and did. They declared it was a shame that the holy places where the Lord Jesus had lived and died should be in the hands of heathens who knew not His name; and doubtless there was much truth in what they said. But they forgot, and those who went to fight at their bidding forgot likewise, that a Christian is bound to be merciful and just, kindly and long-suffering; and that the Saviour, who has said, "They who take the sword shall perish by the sword," is never served by deeds of bloodshed and violence. Men in those days were fierce and cruel; and the Crusaders killed not only the armed men who came out against them, but a great many peaceable and unarmed people, and even women and children; and some were so foolish as to believe that by these wicked deeds they were doing God a service.

There were seven Crusades in all. Over and over again, great armies headed by brave and gallant nobles, princes, and kings, attempted the task of conquering Palestine. Sometimes they almost succeeded, gaining

## THE CRUSADES AND THEIR RESULTS.

great battles, taking cities, and killing many people; but they were never able to keep what they had won, and at last the endeavour to conquer the Holy Land was given up as hopeless.

The FIRST CRUSADE begun in 1096 and ended in 1099. Several great armies started for the Holy Land; but many began fighting with the people of the towns through which they passed, and were killed on their journey through Europe. In spite of this an immense number reached the Holy Land, led on by a brave prince named Godfrey of Boulogne, and by other chiefs, one of whom was Duke Robert of Normandy, son of William the Conqueror. After winning some battles, and suffering great hardships, they attacked Jerusalem, the Holy City, and captured it in the year 1099, putting to death a great number of the people they found there. Godfrey of Boulogne was made King of Jerusalem, and a number of the Crusaders stayed to defend the new kingdom; the rest found their way back to Europe as best they could.

The SECOND CRUSADE was undertaken by the French King Louis VII., and by Conrad III., Emperor of Germany, who wished to win back part of the kingdom that had been taken from the Crusaders. Both leaders were very unfortunate; and after losing a great part of his army, each was very glad to get back to his own country. After this, the Christians lost one place after another in Palestine; and at last, the great prize for which they had striven, the city of Jerusalem, was taken from them. The news of the loss of the Holy City was received with much grief in Europe; and a THIRD CRUSADE was commenced, in which the three greatest monarchs in Europe took part, namely, Richard I. of England, the Emperor Frederic Barbarossa of Germany, and King Philip Augustus of France. But they had a greater monarch to fight against than any of themselves, in the Emperor Saladin; and though many valiant deeds were performed, Jerusalem was not taken by the Christians; and this third Crusade, which began in 1189, ended in 1192, with only some slight advantages to the Crusaders.

The FOURTH CRUSADE, in 1203 and 1204, had a strange end. The Crusaders started full of zeal, and determined to effect great things; but they allowed themselves to be turned from their purpose, and besieged and took, not Jerusalem, but Constantinople, where they founded an

## HENRY I. SEIZES THE CROWN OF ENGLAND.

empire which endured but a short time. Princes, nobles, and people were now beginning to see that Crusades ended in failure—that it was one thing to take cities, and another and a more difficult one to keep them. Thus, though the Pope and the priests still continued to exhort the nations to fight, by way of proving themselves followers of the Prince of Peace, they no longer met with such willing listeners; and so the last Crusades were undertaken each by only one monarch, and failed more quickly and completely than the former attempts. A very pious King of France, called Saint Louis, conducted the sixth and seventh Crusades. The latter took place in the year 1270, and cost Saint Louis his life. And after that the princes of Europe had had enough of crusading, and gave up the idea of conquering the Holy Land.

During the Crusades many knights formed themselves into great companies or brotherhoods. The three chief of these were the Knights Templars the Knights of St. John, and the German Order of Knights.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE REIGN OF HENRY I.

Henry seizes the Crown and royal treasure—Persuades the Saxons to help him—Marries Matilda of Scotland—Buys England from his brother Robert—Endeavours to purchase Normandy—Defeats Robert at Tenchebray, and imprisons him for life.

WHILE the corpse of the Red King William lay on the ground beneath the oak tree in the New Forest, uncared for and abandoned, William's brother Henry, who had been one of the hunting party on that fatal day, and had quickly heard of the death of Rufus, was galloping as fast as his steed could carry him towards Winchester; for in the town of Winchester was kept the treasure or store of money belonging to the English king, and to seize this treasure was the first thought of the selfish Henry.

He had no right to this treasure; for it belonged to his elder brother Robert, who was now the real King of England, as next heir to his father William the Conqueror; but Robert had been long absent, and was not yet returned from the Holy Land; and the unjust and selfish Henry determined to take for himself not only Robert's treasure, but Robert's throne also. One of the nobles, Robert de Breteuil, was bold and honest enough to oppose Henry's design, saying to him, "Thou and I ought loyally to remember the fealty we swore to the Duke Robert, thy brother: he has received our oath of homage, and, absent or present, is entitled to it." But Henry was not to be turned from his purpose. Having seized the treasure, he hastened to London, and persuaded the Norman nobles and clergy whom he found there to elect and crown him king.

Henry did not yet consider himself safe in possession of his stolen honours. He knew that Robert would be enraged, and with good cause, when this treachery should be made known to him. He likewise expected that many of the Norman nobles would take part with Robert against him. Therefore he turned to the people of England, the despised Saxons, and asked them for help. He told them that Robert was a proud and haughty man, who would be certain to oppress them; whereas he, King Henry, would treat them with justice and favour. He even made many promises in writing, declaring that the old laws of Edward the Confessor should be restored, and that whatever was wrong and unjust should be set right; and the English believed him, and hoped that better times were coming at last, and declared themselves ready to fight for King Henry. The king also took care to gain the clergy over to his side, by giving them large estates and granting them many favours, so that the clergy remained his friends; and as Henry had more learning than was usual in those times, when, indeed, few nobles could read and write, they gave him the name of *Beauclerc*, or "Fine Scholar." Still more to secure the help and obedience of the English, Henry married a princess of English birth, Edith, or, as she was afterwards called, Matilda of Scotland, who was a niece of Edgar Atheling, the last descendant of the Saxon kings. For this the proud Norman barons laughed at Henry, calling him and his wife "Godrik and Godiva;" for even the names of Saxons were then a reproach and a by-word among the Normans; but



BATTLE OF TENCHEBRAY.

Henry was more clever than they, and knew that this marriage would be sure to please the Saxons, and make them take his part.

The Norman lords were not at all pleased at these actions of Henry's; and when Robert at last landed in England, very angry to see his throne taken from him by his faithless brother, many lords joined him and promised to drive Henry away.

It seemed as if there would be a great fight between Robert's Normans and Henry's Englishmen; but some of the Norman barons, who did not care to fight against their own countrymen (for there were some Normans on Henry's side also), managed to make peace between the two brothers. It was agreed that Henry should continue to rule over England, paying Robert two thousand pounds of silver every year; and thus the English saw themselves disappointed of the chance of fighting against their Norman oppressors. The peace was disastrous for them in another way, for the crafty king had bought England, and the English had to pay the price he was to give to Robert for it. The old unjust levying of taxes began again, and all the king's promises were forgotten. King Henry's Norman servants ill-treated the Saxons just as King William's had done; and one of the chroniclers tells us, in simple, downright language, that "wherever the king travelled, the people in his train vexed the poor people, and committed in various places murders, and set fire to places." King Henry may have been a fine scholar, but he had not learned the great lesson that it is a king's duty to protect his subjects, and above all things to keep his royal word with them.

If Henry broke faith with his English subjects, he did not keep his word with his own brother. Of the three sons of the Conqueror who have played a part in history, Robert of Normandy was, after all, the best. He had certainly no talent as a ruler, and could not keep his restless and turbulent barons in order; and he was of a light and changeable temper, and often gave away great possessions for a very small price to gratify the whim of the moment. But on the other hand, he was a brave and gallant prince; when he made a promise he kept it, therein presenting a great contrast to his brother Henry; and even in his quarrels with his brothers he had often behaved generously and well. But Henry, always seeking his own advantage, wished still further to

## BATTLE OF TENCHEBRAY—ROBERT A PRISONER.

profit by Robert's heedlessness. He had bought England of Robert, and now he could not rest until he had obtained Normandy also. He therefore encouraged Robert's barons' discontent and rebellion, and took advantage of the presence of Robert himself in England to extort from the duke a resignation of the pension for which England had been ceded. Afterwards he offered to purchase Normandy from Robert for a sum of money; and when the duke, who had experience of the way in which his brother broke faith, indignantly refused, the treacherous Henry determined to take his brother's territory by force.

Henry knew that he should require money to pay the expenses of the invasion of Normandy. He therefore sent out his collectors among the English, and thousands were ruined by having all they possessed extorted from them in the king's name; and Henry crossed the Channel with a large army, and began to attack Robert's cities. He took several; but the winter came on, and he was obliged to retire into England.

In the following spring he returned to Normandy, and a battle was fought between him and Robert near a castle called Tenchebray. Robert fought with great courage; but one of his friends fled during the action, taking with him many of Robert's men, and thus Henry gained the victory. Robert himself was taken prisoner, together with Edgar Atheling, the descendant of the Saxon kings, and nearly ten thousand other captives. Henry soon conquered Normandy after this, and returned to England in triumph, carrying his prisoners with him. Edgar Atheling was not dangerous, so Henry set him free, and even gave him a small estate; and Edgar at last died in England at a good old age. Very different was the king's conduct towards his brother. The unfortunate Robert was shut up in Cardiff Castle: at first some little liberty was allowed him, but he tried to escape, and after this he was guarded much more strictly. In Cardiff Castle he was kept a prisoner by his ungrateful brother till his death, which happened many years afterwards. Some writers say that Henry caused Robert's eyes to be put out, but this is not certain, and indeed seems too horrible to be believed.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE REIGN OF HENRY I. CONTINUED.

Henry's power and prosperity—His son William—Voyage to Normandy to receive the oath of fealty—The wreck of the *Blanche Nef*, and death of William—Henry's grief—Maude appointed his Successor—Death of Henry—His character.

AFTER the victory at Tenchebray had put Robert into his power, everything seemed to go prosperously with King Henry. The King of France, indeed, tried to do him harm, and took up the cause of young William, Robert's son; but Henry continued to maintain his power, both in England and Normandy, and to bid defiance to his enemies. He had a dispute with the Pope, who was then gaining more and more power, concerning the right of electing bishops; but he was clever enough to make friends with the Church, which, indeed, was so powerful in those days, that no monarch could stand up against it. The King of France at last gave up fighting against Henry, and consented that Prince William, Henry's son, should receive Normandy, on condition that he acknowledged himself the vassal or subject of the King of France. Thus the young prince was taken into Normandy by King Henry, and the lords and barons swore to be faithful to him as their duke. And now that the great wish of Henry's heart, the succession of his son, seemed secured, the king prepared, in the beginning of the winter of the year 1120, to return to England with his son, and a number of lords and vassals who had gone to Normandy with him.

A terrible misfortune now fell upon him, which crushed the hopes the king felt sure of seeing fulfilled, and embittered all the rest of his life. The fleet was to sail from the Norman port of Barfleur; and just when the king was ready to depart, a seaman named Thomas Fitzstephen came to him and made the following request. He said: "Stephen, son of Erad, my father, served thy father all his life upon the sea, and it was he who commanded the vessel which bore thy father to the conquest. Lord king, I entreat thee to grant me in fief the same office. I have





WRECK OF THE BLANCHE NEF.

## THE WRECK OF THE "BLANCHE NEF."

a vessel called *La Blanche Nef*, fitly provided." Now the king had already chosen a ship for himself, but granted to Fitzstephen the honour of carrying over Prince William and some other members of his family in the "White Ship." The *Blanche Nef* sailed later than the king's ship. Wine had been given to the sailors before they started; and while all on board were merry and joyful, and no one dreamt of danger, the ship suddenly ran upon a rock, and began to fill with water. Then all was terror and dismay. The prince and some of his companions got into a boat and might have escaped; but when they had pushed the boat off, and had got clear of the crowd of struggling and drowning wretches in the water, Prince William heard the shrieks of his sister, the Countess of Perche. He generously resolved to save her, and insisted that the boat should be rowed back to the sinking ship. But the perishing crew, seeing a chance of life for them, clung in such numbers to the sides of the boat that it overset, and all were drowned together. More than a hundred and forty young lords perished with their prince in the wreck of the "White Ship." Fitzstephen, the unlucky captain, rose to the surface, and saw a butcher of Rouen, named Berouald, clinging to the mast-head, which was still above water. He asked if the prince had escaped; and on hearing from Berouald that William and all his company had perished, threw up his hands, with a despairing cry of "Woe is me!" and sank beneath the waves. It was in the evening that the *Blanche Nef* had gone down; and all through the cold December night Berouald clung to the mast. In the morning some fishermen saw him, and took him into their boat—the sole survivor of the gallant company that had sailed out from Barfleur a few short hours before. Meanwhile King Henry had concluded his voyage and arrived safely in England. When the news of the terrible disaster came, for some days no one dared to tell Henry what had happened. At length, when it could no longer be hidden, a favourite little page was ordered to say what had happened. The king fainted with grief; and though he lived for fifteen years after this terrible blow had fallen upon him, the happiness of his life was gone, and we are told that never again was a smile seen upon his face.

The Saxon chroniclers or writers of history give this Prince William a very bad character. They tell how he declared that if he ever came

to govern England, he would yoke the Saxons, like cattle, to the plough; and they rejoiced with rather unseemly triumph over the sudden and violent death which struck him down in the midst of his pride. But we must remember that the prince was young and inexperienced, and that it was not astonishing he should despise the English, inasmuch as it was the custom of the Normans generally to speak of the English in terms of contempt and derision, as if they had been altogether inferior beings, fit only to carry burdens and to toil as slaves. Certain it is that his death was a terrible example of the uncertainty of all human greatness and prosperity.

Thus all King Henry's hopes, bound up in this son, who was to succeed him and establish his family firmly on the throne of England, were overthrown at a blow; for William left no family, and King Henry's Saxon wife had not borne him any other son. But he had a daughter, named after her mother, Matilda or Maude. This daughter had been married to Henry V., Emperor of Germany, and thus she is generally known in history as the Empress Maude.

After the death of the emperor, who had no children, Matilda married a French nobleman, Geoffrey, Count of Anjou; and by this second marriage she had a son named Henry, and afterwards other children. King Henry was now very anxious that his daughter should succeed him. Therefore, at a great court which he held in Windsor Castle, he obliged all the nobles to take an oath, that after his death they would be obedient to Matilda, and acknowledge her as Queen of England and Duchess of Normandy. When, after her marriage with Geoffrey of Anjou, Matilda's first son Henry was born, the old king caused all the nobles, both of England and Normandy, to renew the oath of fidelity they had taken; and now he thought he had provided thoroughly for the future rank of his favourite, and that Matilda would assuredly sit on the English throne. But, as you will see, he was mistaken.

In the year 1135, Henry was preparing to go from Normandy into England, to put down a revolt that had arisen among the Welsh. He happened to eat too plentifully of some eels called lampreys, and fell suddenly ill. In a few days he died, after a reign of nearly thirty-five years. He left all he possessed to the Empress Maude. He had married

again, after the death of Matilda of Scotland; but his second wife, Adela, daughter of the Count of Louvain, brought him no children.

We cannot consider this king a good man, though he was undoubtedly a clever and politic one. His conduct to his father and to his brother Robert was heartless and treacherous, and to the English he showed himself cruel and rapacious. But some allowance must be made for the rough hard times in which he lived. In those days rulers had little idea of right or justice: they chiefly sought their own advantage; and conquered nations were generally treated as if they had no rights at all. To kill one of the king's deer was considered a far more serious matter than to slay a mere Saxon peasant; and the punishments inflicted were cruel and merciless. For a very small fault a man might be condemned to have his eyes put out, or his hands or feet cut off. Such was the Norman rule; and, in general, Henry Beauclerc was no better and no worse than those around him.

## CHAPTER VII

### KING STEPHEN.

Stephen of Blois—His relationship to the Conqueror—He seizes the Throne—Matilda and her Partizans—The power of the Church—Stephen's efforts to maintain his power—His misfortunes.

AT the court of King Henry I. there had been for some years a handsome, gallant young noble, upon whom the king looked with great favour. The name of this noble was Stephen. He was a grandson of William the Conqueror, and consequently a nephew of King Henry. He had vast possessions in France; and King Henry, anxious perhaps to secure the friendship of the powerful lord for his daughter Matilda, had conferred many benefits upon him, and treated him almost like a son. Little did King Henry think that he should hardly be dead before this

Stephen would rise up, not to defend Máude and establish her title, but to fight for himself, and assert a claim to the throne of England.

The method taken by Stephen to establish himself as King of England seems in many respects to have been an almost exact copy of the means taken by Henry himself, many years before, to oust his brother Robert. Like Henry, he seized the royal treasure at Winchester. It amounted to a hundred thousand pounds, and spoke well for the late king's talent in taxing his subjects. Stephen knew that the possession of money would be a powerful argument with many; and he employed Henry's treasure, partly in bribing the wavering, partly in the equipment and provisioning of troops. He also hastened to get to London, to cause himself to be crowned; and this he effected chiefly through the influence of his own brother Henry, whom the late king had made Bishop of Winchester. He likewise obtained the good word of the Pope—a very important point, for in those days the Pope's power was superior to that of any monarch in Europe, and no king could quarrel with the head of the Church at Rome, without feeling the consequences, by finding himself abandoned by almost every vassal he had. As a further resource, he brought over a number of unemployed soldiers from Flanders and Brittany, to guard his ill-gained throne. In Normandy likewise he gained to his side a number of the nobility, who cared little for the oath of allegiance they had taken to Matilda, and who thought it a disgrace that a woman should reign over them. And now the ungrateful usurper thought himself strong enough to resist any power that the Empress Maude and her friends might bring against him.

But Stephen soon found his position to be far from agreeable. The clergy and nobles who had acknowledged him as king, knew very well, and indeed he himself knew also, that he had no right to the crown; therefore they had only submitted to him upon conditions. The clergy stipulated that they should uphold Stephen only so long as Stephen upheld the rights of the Church, which in plain terms meant that they required to have their own way in everything, and to place their power above his. The nobles declared that they must have the right of fortifying their castles; and by doing this they made themselves petty kings, carrying on war against each other, and ruling in their own districts, as

if there were no king in England at all. The king on his part hoped to keep up his authority by means of the bands of paid foreigners he had brought from beyond the Channel; and in the scenes of warfare, riot, and spoliation which ensued, how miserable must have been the condition of the defenceless English!

Stephen was not satisfied with having merely the name of king; but so soon as he tried to make his power felt, a number of the barons revolted against him; and foremost among these was Robert, Earl of Gloucester, a near relation and great friend of Matilda, who had probably only submitted to Stephen that he might gain time to form a plan for placing Maude on the throne. King David of Scotland and his son Henry also took up arms for Maude. They led a large army into England, and Stephen was obliged to march northward to meet them. On the 22nd of August was fought the great battle of the Standard. The English army raised a banner on a stout high pole, and, mounting this pole on four wheels, placed it in the centre of their host; and from this circumstance the battle took its name.

The Scottish army was composed in great part of Highlanders, brave and hardy men, but untaught in the art of war, and unused to the Norman and English method of fighting. They were defeated with great slaughter after an obstinate combat, in which the Norman lances and the Saxon arrows did good service. An attempt at a general insurrection in England and on the borders of Wales also failed; and for a time it seemed that Stephen's ill-gotten power was too strong to be overthrown, and that he would maintain the throne he had usurped.

But Stephen was so imprudent as to quarrel with the churchmen. Many of the bishops in those days were anything but peaceful men. They had castles which they fortified strongly, and large troops of armed vassals; and in many cases they were more ready for war than for peace. Stephen, who knew that he could not really have much power while his nobles and clergy thus fortified themselves against him, resolved to begin by making the Bishops of Salisbury and Lincoln give up the fortresses they were building; for he declared that priests had no need of fortified castles. Accordingly he seized the two bishops, and did not set them free until they had delivered up their strongholds into his hands.



STEPHEN CAPTIVE AT LINCOLN.

This proceeding raised a storm of anger against King Stephen. His own brother, the Bishop of Winchester, now opposed him. Many who had before been afraid to attempt anything against the usurper, now took up arms to dethrone him ; and the Empress Maude herself, hoping to gain the crown by the aid of Robert of Gloucester and his numerous followers, landed in England, and took up her residence at Arundel Castle. Stephen was a bold man. At an earlier attempt at revolt he had already said, "They have made me king, and now they abandon me, but" (and here he swore a great oath) "they shall never call me a deposed king." He called together his friends, and concealed, as he best might, his chagrin and rage when he saw that every day some of his partisans were deserting him to go over to the side of Maude.

And now the unhappy realm of England was in a worse condition than at any time since the Conquest. Bands of armed men traversed the country in every direction, plundering and insulting, and often even torturing and slaying the people. There was no law, no justice to be had. The barons waged war upon each other, each plundering the territories of his rival, and taxing his own to maintain the cost of the war. In mere despair, the husbandmen in many parts gave up cultivating the land. Thus no corn was sown, and no harvest reaped ; and soon there was a grievous famine. At length a great battle was fought at Lincoln on the 2nd of February, 1141. After fighting for a time, Stephen's men fled, and the usurper was left almost alone in the field, gnashing his teeth with rage and vexation. Surrounded by his foes, he found flight impossible. He was forced to surrender himself a prisoner, and was soon loaded with chains and closely guarded. Matilda's friends triumphed, and proclaimed the Empress, Queen of England.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE REIGN OF STEPHEN CONTINUED.

Imprudent conduct of Maude—Its effect upon the people—Release of Stephen, and commencement of the War—Maude's disaster at Oxford—Stephen reinstated—His treaty with Prince Henry—His death in 1154—State of England during his reign.

IF the Empress Maude had possessed temper and discretion, she might probably have reigned over England to the day of her death, leaving her son Henry to succeed to the throne; but she was proud and vindictive, and seems to have forgotten the precept that "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." Knowing that the fall of Stephen had in the first instance been caused by his opposition to the clergy, she fell into the error of supposing that with the Church on her side she need not trouble herself to conciliate the good-will of any other part of the nation. She put herself into the hands of Henry, the Bishop of Winchester, Stephen's brother, who summoned only the clergy, instead of calling together the nobles, as he should have done, to crown Matilda; and this gave great offence to the barons, who were indignant at seeing themselves thus neglected. Moreover, Henry of Winchester never was a sincere friend of Maude; and while he wished, it is thought, to humiliate his brother and to punish him for opposing the clergy, he never intended that Stephen should be kept in the close imprisonment in which the fallen usurper was held by Maude and her friends. By a little leniency, and by the display of good-will and mercy, Maude would have further strengthened her position: by pride and haughtiness she lost all she had gained.

The wife of Stephen offered that her husband should retire into a monastery if Maude would set him at liberty, and many of the nobility seconded her request; but Maude refused. The citizens of London came to beg the boon that had been promised to them by every king, and never fulfilled—the restoration of the laws of Edward the Confessor; but Maude sent them away with a contemptuous reply. Henry, Bishop

of Winchester, came to request that Eustace, the son of Stephen, might be allowed possession of the property that belonged to him in France, and to which Maude certainly had no claim; but again she haughtily refused. And thus in a few weeks she offended three separate classes—the nobles, the citizens, and the Church.

Thereupon Henry, Bishop of Winchester, disgusted at Maude's ingratitude, went back to his brother's side. The Londoners revolted against the queen, and Robert of Gloucester, the leader of Maude's party, was obliged to march with his army to Winchester to attack the bishop's fortified castle. In this enterprise he failed; for the revolted Londoners came down upon him with a large force. His followers were put to flight, and Robert himself was taken prisoner; so that now Matilda had lost her best adviser and friend. There was no way to retrieve this disaster but by exchanging the earl for Stephen; and, now the opposite faction had regained its leader, the civil war began again with renewed fury. Sometimes Stephen's followers gained an advantage, sometimes the friends of Matilda. Towns and villages were burnt, and peasants slain, and fields laid waste. Even the churches were converted into fortresses, and the towers were attacked and defended as though the house of God had been an abode of violence and bloodshed.

It would be tedious to go through all the details of this long strife, which lasted during nearly all the remainder of Stephen's reign. Once Maude shut herself up in the city of Oxford during the absence of her brother the Earl of Gloucester. Stephen besieged the place, and declared that he would take Matilda prisoner. She managed, however, to escape from the city during a snowy night by the expedient of dressing in white, and slipping through a postern gate, with three followers clad like herself. Soon afterwards she had the happiness of welcoming her young son Henry, who came from Normandy with a small band of followers; but his arrival had no effect on the war; and soon after, Maude, weary with the long strife and disheartened at seeing her party grow weaker and weaker, finally quitted England. With the death of the great Earl of Gloucester, the leader of her party, and the chief counsellor and friend of the Empress Maude, her hopes of being reinstated in her power in England ended.



MAUDE'S ESCAPE FROM OXFORD IN THE SNOW.

## HENRY OF ANJOU—STEPHEN'S DEATH.

Indeed, the civil war which went on at intervals for years, might have concluded altogether had it not been for Stephen's efforts to reduce the power of the nobles. He tried to make them surrender the castles they had built; but they refused, and many of them turned against him from fear that he would rule them too strictly if they submitted. In the meantime, the young Henry, Matilda's son, who had been a mere infant when his grandfather died, was growing in years and wisdom. He had already been made Duke of Normandy, and on the death of his father, Geoffrey of Anjou, he obtained still more power. Accordingly, in 1153, he came to England with an army, and it seemed as if the terrible war was to be renewed. But some of the barons on both sides managed to bring about a treaty between Stephen and Henry. It was concluded that the king should continue to wear the crown so long as he lived, and that, at his death, Prince Henry should succeed him. Stephen's son Eustace, to whom he had wished to leave the crown, was dead; therefore the arrangement was soon concluded, and the barons did homage and promised obedience to Henry as the heir who should reign over them after Stephen's death.

That event soon happened. In the very next year (1154) Stephen died after a short illness, and with him ended the rule of the Norman kings in England. The nineteen years during which he had been sometimes really, sometimes nominally, King of England, were the most disastrous that had passed since the fatal Hastings year. The crown, unjustly snatched from the heir who had the right to wear it, had brought him neither profit nor happiness. He was not allowed to wear it in quiet himself, nor did it descend to his family after him. As Count of Blois he had been rich, and prosperous, and honoured; as King of England he was harassed by continual danger, surrounded by false friends or open enemies, and conscious of crime and dishonesty. Seldom in history have we a more complete instance of the fact that a man's sin will find him out, than we meet with in the life of Stephen.

When he died, the English had been under the Norman rule for nearly ninety years. They had suffered every kind of injustice and wrong, and had been oppressed and ground to the earth by their haughty and cruel masters. The Normans considered themselves as beings of a superior

race to those over whom they ruled; and with them the very name of an Englishman was a by-word and a reproach. They even kept their own language quite apart from that of their subjects, disdainingly to talk in the Saxon tongue. But all this oppression and scorn only bound the Saxons closer together: they never forgot how their ancestors had ruled in that England where now they were brought so grievously low; and through all these dark days they preserved their love of justice and their longing after freedom and right.



## PART III. THE FIRST PLANTAGENETS.

### CHAPTER I.

#### HENRY II.

Improved state of the country under the Plantagenet rule—Henry's vigorous measures—Thomas à Becket—His parentage and birth—His influence with the King—Becomes Chancellor of England—Story of Henry, Becket, and the beggar—Becket made Archbishop of Canterbury.

WE now come to a reign that occupies a glorious and an important position in English history; for it marks the dawn of a better state of things throughout the country. The story of the Norman kings and of their rule is a sad record of oppression and wrong; of tyranny, borne sometimes in sullen or despairing silence, sometimes resisted with a fitful violence which produced no result to the insurgents but cruel punishment and additional misery; the rulers are tyrants, and the bulk of the people slaves. But under the Plantagenet kings, whose history we now commence, the dreary aspect of affairs begins to change for the better. Gradually the old hatred between Saxon and Norman begins to die out, and the two races try to work together, each bringing some benefit to the other. Law and justice begin to assert their power against violence

and wrong. The property of the quiet citizen or farmer is no longer at the mercy of the robber baron or of his dishonest followers. With security and protection for the weak, industry and invention begin to prosper again. The land, wasted by long years of strife and famine, gradually resumes the appearance it wore before those terrible scourges came upon it; and the Saxon inhabitants of England begin to believe that happier times may yet come, when, according to the promise given, but not kept, by the Conqueror, "Every man shall be law-worthy; and every man shall be his father's heir after his father's death."

Of this change much is due to the great king whose history I have now to tell. Henry II. had all the quick wit and mental power, without the cruelty and perfidy, of his grandfather Henry I. As Duke of Normandy and Count of Anjou he had given promise of rare qualities and talents; and his later years richly fulfilled the hopes entertained of him in his youth.

The surname "Plantagenet," by which the line of kings commencing with him is known in history, is derived from Geoffrey of Anjou, Henry's father, who took part in the second Crusade commenced by Louis VII. in 1141. As a distinguishing mark by which his followers should know him when he was encased in his armour, Geoffrey was accustomed to wear in his helmet a branch of the *planta genesta*, or broom. Thus he was called Geoffrey Plantagenet, or Geoffrey of the broom-plant; and the name was retained by his descendants.

The first of the Plantagenet kings certainly ascended the throne under peculiar advantages—advantages which he knew how to employ to the best purpose. His title to the crown was clear and unquestioned; he had already become known as a prince of rare talent and capacity; and Englishmen and Normans, wearied with the strife and bloodshed of the last twenty years, combined to welcome him joyfully to England. Henry also possessed far greater power than Stephen could ever boast. A considerable part of France belonged to him. He had Normandy, Anjou, Touraine, and Maine; and moreover he had, not long before Stephen's death, married Eleanor, the heiress of Aquitaine—an alliance which brought him much land, much influence, and subsequently much unhappiness.

Armed with this power, he began vigorously to set England in order. Many of the strong castles, which were little better than dens of robbers, he seized and demolished. He sent away the foreign soldiers and vagabonds whom Stephen had summoned to England to support his ill-gotten crown, and began to punish all robbers and law-breakers with a severity which soon reduced their number and their boldness; and restored to England a degree of law and order that had been unknown for many years.

I have now to speak of King Henry's connection with a very remarkable man, whose name has become celebrated in the history of his times. This man is the famous Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Becket, or, as he is generally called, Thomas à Becket.

This celebrated man was the son of Gilbert Becket, a merchant of London. His mother was a Saracen maiden, by whose assistance Gilbert Becket had escaped from slavery among the infidels in Palestine; she had followed the Christian captive to England, though she knew but two words of his language—his name "Gilbert," and "London," the place where he dwelt. He actually found her in the streets of London, seeking for him, and repeating, "Gilbert! Gilbert!" his name. He had her baptized, and they were married. Thomas Becket was their eldest son. Thomas received a good education—a rare advantage in those days—and first became a favourite with some of the barons, and then with the king, who made him his friend and companion, and bestowed various offices upon him. At length Thomas à Becket became the king's chancellor, or keeper of the great seal, and was entrusted with the education of Henry's eldest son.

Becket belonged to the clergy, for he was a deacon; but he lived as gaily and expensively as any noble, took his share in all the king's pastimes and sports, and led a great troop of soldiers in person into the field in the king's wars. As a proof of the familiar terms on which Becket lived with the king, it is told how one day they were riding together, when they met a poor half-naked beggar. Henry asked Becket if it would not be a good deed to supply this poor man with a cloak; and on the chancellor's replying "It would surely," the king exclaimed, "Then he shall have one;" and by main force pulled off

Becket's rich cloak, though the chancellor struggled hard to retain it, and bestowed the costly garment on the astonished beggar.

The Church at this time was at the height of its power. During the turbulent reign of Stephen the power of the clergy had greatly increased, and the Pope, considering himself placed high above all kings, taxed the people on his own authority. Henry wished to reduce the pretensions of the clergy to something like reason; for they even refused to be tried by the king's judges, declaring that the Church alone had the power to punish churchmen for any offences. Therefore, when an opportunity occurred, Henry thought he should increase his own power by giving to Becket, whom he believed to be devoted to his interests, the highest Church office in the kingdom. Accordingly he nominated him to the office of Primate of England; and Becket the courtier and favourite was duly installed as Archbishop of Canterbury.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE REIGN OF HENRY II. CONTINUED.

Becket's opposition to Henry—The quarrel between the King and the Archbishop—The Council of Clarendon—Becket's flight to France—His return and death—Embarrassment and danger of Henry—His acts of penitence—Conquest of Ireland—The King's family troubles—His death in 1189.

HENRY found himself completely deceived in the effect produced by the elevation of Becket. He had imagined that the highest dignitary of the Church would continue to be his humble servant and vassal; and fancied Becket the archbishop would still be Becket the courtier, fond of splendour, proud of his wealth, and anxious to preserve his master's favour. But Becket adopted an entirely opposite course. He was, indeed, ready to work zealously for his master's interest; but he no longer considered Henry, but the Pope, as the master whom he was bound to serve. Formerly his palace had been thronged with barons and lords; he now opened it to priests and monks, whose favour he worked hard



## RECONCILIATION BETWEEN THE KING AND THE ARCHBISHOP.

to gain, and to the poor, whose champion and protector he publicly announced himself. The churchmen were delighted when they saw the great statesman on their side, and upheld every word and every action of Becket's. The king at first was astonished and then enraged at the proceedings of a man who, after being his servant for years, now dared openly to thwart his will, and to assert that the power of the Church was above that of the king. Outwardly the archbishop exhibited every sign of deep humility. He resigned his office as Henry's chancellor, declaring that all his energies and talents must be henceforth devoted to the fulfilment of his Church duties. The common people looked upon him as a saint; for while he tried every expedient to put the power of the Church above that of the king, he wore sackcloth next his skin, put bitter herbs into the water he drank, and scourged his own back with a whip to show his humility. At the same time he excited the bishops under his authority to declare themselves above the king's law, and to stand up for the Church against the State.

The king insisted that all clergymen who were charged with offences against the laws should be tried by his judges, like the rest of his subjects. Becket insisted that they could only be tried by priests. The king called together a great assembly of the nobles and clergy at Clarendon, in Wiltshire, and published a number of ordinances, to which he required all present to submit. The bishops consented; but Becket refused, though he was soon compelled to make a kind of submission. Presently, when Becket found that he could not maintain himself against the king in England, he fled to France, and appealed to the Pope; Henry also appealed to Rome; and the quarrel went on for years. At last Henry came to France, and Becket met him in the presence of the French king. Each spoke of his grievances. Becket made a partial submission, and Henry became half reconciled to him; but it was seen that neither trusted the other; and when Becket parted from Henry to return to his see of Canterbury, he said, in a significant way, to the king, "I believe that I shall see you no more." Becket had been absent from England for six years; and it might be supposed that so long a banishment would soften his spirit, and render him anxious for peace. But so soon as he found himself surrounded by the populace in

England, who looked upon him as the champion of the Saxon name, and as a holy man suffering in the cause of the Church, he no longer strove to restrain his haughty and revengeful spirit. Almost his first act was to depose some bishops who had opposed him, and to excommunicate a number of the king's friends. The deposed bishops made the best of their way to France, and told Henry of Becket's conduct; and the king burst out in a fit of rage, declaring that he wondered there was not one of his friends who would rid him of this turbulent priest.

The words were spoken in haste and in anger; but they bore bitter fruit. Four of Henry's knights heard them, and swore among themselves that the proud archbishop should trouble the king no more. They at once took ship; and crossing the water to England, proceeded at once to Canterbury. The archbishop received them in a calm and dignified manner, and listened almost without reply to their reproaches. When the bell rang for afternoon prayers, he went into the cathedral, but the angry Normans followed him, and slew him on the steps of the altar.

Henry was greatly disturbed when he heard of Becket's death. He could scarcely have grieved much at the fate of a man who had for years been his bitter enemy; but he feared that the murder of Becket might array both the Church and the people against him. Therefore, he was obliged to humiliate himself in many ways. At the tomb which covered the remains of the great archbishop, whom the people now worshipped as a saint and martyr, the King of England was compelled to kneel, clad in sackcloth, the garb of penitence, while monks scourged his shoulders with whips. He paid an enormous sum of money towards an expedition which the Pope was exhorting all the princes of Europe to undertake against the Saracen's in Palestine; and by these and other concessions he escaped the sentence he most feared from the Pope—a sentence of excommunication. For in those days the Church enjoyed the confidence and respect of the people in every nation, while the government was looked upon with fear, generally mingled with hatred. Therefore the people always took the side of the Church in every quarrel; and as the Church allowed the people of an excommunicated sovereign to revolt, they seldom failed to avail themselves of the permission.

In quitting the subject of the king's controversy with Becket, of which

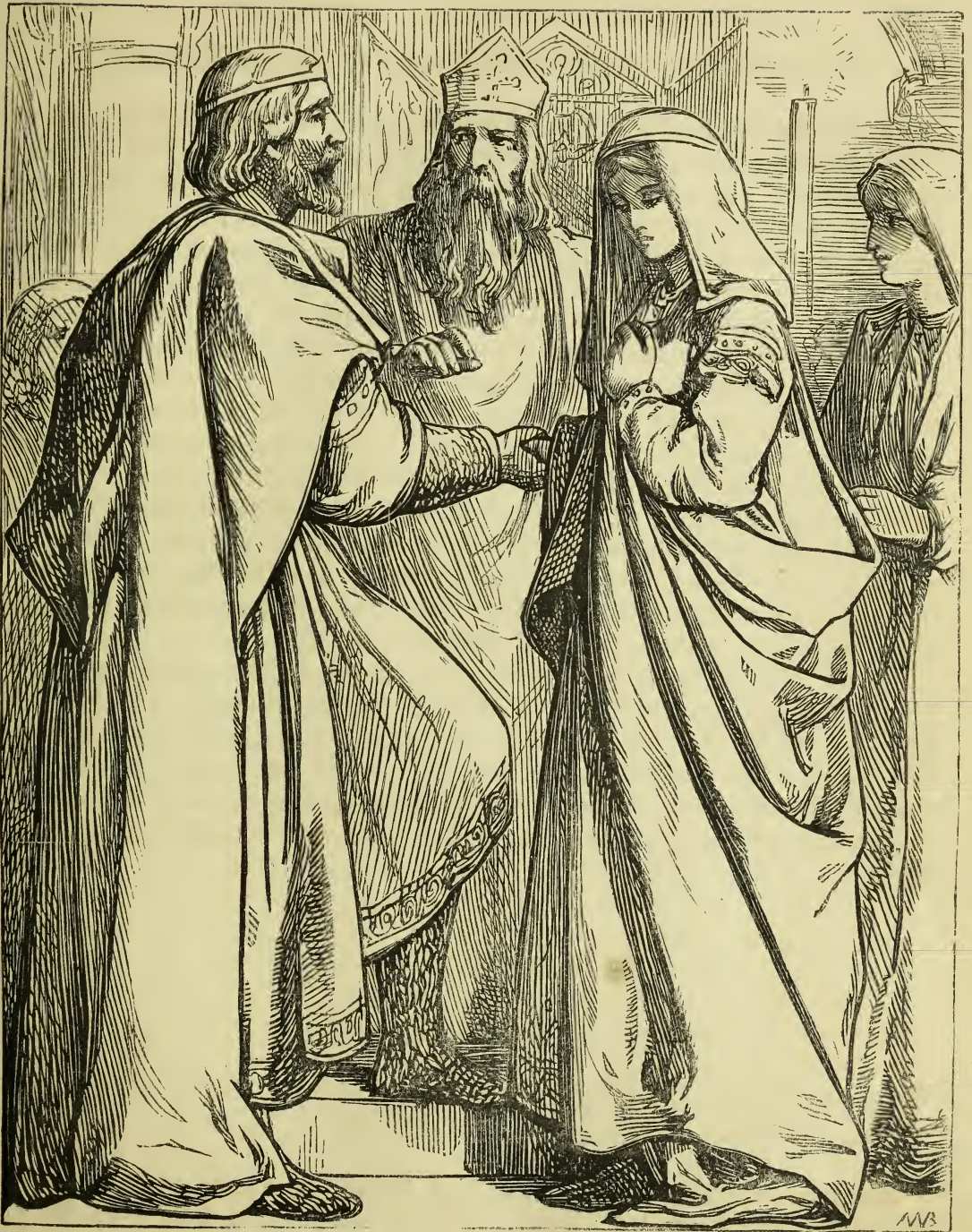


DEATH OF THOMAS à BECKET.

## IRELAND CONQUERED BY STRONGBOW.

only a very scanty outline has been given, it would be wrong not to state that Henry frequently erred, by introducing measures especially intended to irritate and annoy his antagonist. As in most quarrels of the kind, neither side was altogether right or quite wrong.

Henry was very fortunate in war. One of the greatest achievements of his reign was the conquest of Ireland. Like England in the Saxon times, Ireland was then governed by many chiefs and kings, the five principal being the kings of Ulster, Munster, Leinster, Connaught, and Meath. One of these acted as chief king, much as the Bretwalda had done in England in the old days. Early in his reign Henry had conceived the design of reducing Ireland to subjection; and the Pope, who declared that the right of disposing of kingdoms belonged to the Church (it is astonishing how much was said to belong to the Church in those days), had given Henry written permission to take possession of the island. But Henry had been prevented, chiefly by the quarrels with Becket, from following up the enterprise. Now it happened that Dermot Mac Murrough, King of Leinster, was deposed for various crimes he had committed; and, anxious to regain his dominions, he sent to Henry in France, begging for aid, and promising to pay homage to the King of England if his territory were re-conquered for him. Henry thereupon gave permission to any of his knights who might choose, to help Mac Murrough. Thereupon Richard, Earl of Pembroke, called Strongbow, went over to Ireland with some well-armed followers, and soon reinstated Dermot in the government. He married Eva, the Irish king's daughter, and, on the death of Dermot, began to spread his own authority far and wide. But now Henry became jealous of the progress made by Strongbow, who seemed inclined to found a separate kingdom. He recalled all his subjects from Ireland, and was only appeased when Strongbow and his followers offered to hold their conquests as vassals of the King of England. Henry himself landed in Ireland with many knights and men-at-arms; and all the southern part of the island submitted to him. He made Strongbow his deputy, and returned to England. At a later period he sent his son John as viceroy into Ireland; but John and his vain companions made enemies of all whom they met, and very nearly caused Ireland to revolt from the king.



## REBELLIONS OF HENRY'S SONS—HIS DEATH—RICHARD I.

In his own family Henry was very unhappy. His sons, to whom he had generously given territories, proved ungrateful and revolted against him. Henry, the eldest, whom the king had caused to be crowned, listened to the bad counsels of Louis VII., King of France, and rebelled against his father because Henry very naturally refused to yield either the crown of England or Normandy to him. Henry died before his father, and upon his death-bed repented of his crimes. Richard, the second son, Geoffrey, the third, and John, the youngest and the favourite of his father, were all equally undutiful, and many of the barons supported them; for they thought each chief would have more liberty to rule as he chose, under young and weak princes, than under such an experienced monarch as Henry. In their rebellion the young princes were encouraged by their mother, Eleanor of Aquitaine. The King of Scotland also invaded England; but he was taken prisoner, in Northumberland, by Henry's famous baron, Ralph de Glanville. After this triumph Henry made peace with his sons, and set the Scottish king at liberty, after receiving an oath of homage from him.

In 1189 Richard again revolted against his father: once more the king triumphed, and Richard was obliged to make submission; but when the old king found in the list of the barons who had joined in this revolt the name of his favourite son John, the perfidy and ingratitude of his children broke his heart, and he turned his face to the wall and died. He was fifty-seven years old, and had reigned over England thirty-four years.

### CHAPTER III.

#### RICHARD I.

Richard's accession in 1189 — His character — The Third Crusade — Richard's departure from England — Quarrel with the French King — Richard's deeds in Palestine — Failure of the Crusade — Richard's attempt to return in disguise — Taken prisoner by Leopold of Austria.

**RICHARD**, the eldest surviving son of Henry, succeeded to the throne of England at his father's death. He was distinguished for his bravery

## RICHARD'S BRAVERY—THE THIRD CRUSADE.

even in those warlike times, when even churchmen rode to the field of battle, and every noble wielded the sword and lance. Thus he obtained the surname of *Cœur de Lion*, or the Lion-hearted; but he was not a good king. More than mere courage is required to fit a man to bear rule in a kingdom; and except his undaunted courage, Richard had few kingly qualities. To obtain military fame was his highest ambition; and to this wish he sacrificed the good of his subjects, of whom, indeed, he took little notice, using them merely as a means for gaining money. He reigned ten years, and in all those ten years he did not spend ten months in England.

Great preparations had been in progress for some time for a third Crusade; and three monarchs had bound themselves by an oath to take part in its perils and glories. They were Frederic, called Barbarossa, or the "Red Beard," Emperor of Germany; Philip, surnamed Augustus, King of France; and Richard the Lion-hearted of England. The Emperor of Germany set out first with his army, and perished by drowning on his way to the Holy Land. Richard and Philip made great preparations for carrying out their enterprise; and Richard at least was determined to persevere until Jerusalem should be regained. He sold a number of the royal manors or estates to obtain money for the equipment of his troops. In some cases this was to the advantage of the Saxon burghers, who bought the houses and farms in which they lived, and thus raised themselves to a better position than any of their ancestors had occupied since the Conquest. The eagerness of the king to raise money was remarkable. He declared he would sell London itself if he could only find a purchaser.

With a gallant company of knights and followers King Richard set sail for the Holy Land. At Messina he joined Philip, King of France, and the two armies were to proceed together on their enterprise. A set of rules had been drawn up for the conduct of the two armies during the journey; and to show the roughness of the times one of those rules may be quoted. It declared that any sergeant-at-arms, labourer, or sailor who presumed to play for money at any game whatever during the transit, the former should be flogged once a day for three days, and the latter should be plunged three times in the sea from the topmast. Priests and

knights might play, so long as they did not lose more than twenty sous in one day; the kings had the privilege of playing for what stakes they chose.

But though the French and English were joined in the same enterprise, there was no love or union between their leaders. Richard often showed himself arrogant and overbearing; and Philip, who moreover longed to be back in France looking after his own affairs, distrusted, or affected to distrust, the King of England. When Conrad of Montferrat, a French noble, was killed by some Saracens, Philip pretended to believe that Richard had hired the assassins; presently he declared that his own life was in danger, and retired from the Crusade, leaving some of his men behind him. How he employed himself in France we shall see presently.

Abandoned by his treacherous ally, and left to finish the Crusade alone, Richard showed himself worthy of his surname of Cœur de Lion. He took several towns in Palestine. His valour rendered his very name a terror to the Saracens; and when there was work to be done, no labourer in the army wrought harder than the brave English king. But to take Jerusalem was beyond his power. He had, indeed, sworn that he would not quit the Holy Land "so long as there remained an ass for him to eat;" but the crusaders were getting tired of the enterprise, and began to return home in numbers. Sickness, moreover, appeared among them, and attacked Richard himself, who besides heard very startling and grave news from Europe relative to the King of France, and to his own brother John. Therefore he concluded with the great Saracen Emperor Saladin a truce for three years, three months, three weeks, three days, and three hours. He stipulated that the towns he had taken should remain in the hands of the Christians, and that all pilgrims should have free access to the holy places. Then he turned his back upon Palestine, resolving to get home as secretly and quickly as possible. But he was recognized as he attempted to pass in disguise through the city of Vienna. The Duke Leopold of Austria had a grudge against him, and therefore took him prisoner, and shut him up in a strong castle.



## CHAPTER IV.

### THE REIGN OF RICHARD I. CONTINUED.

State of England during Richard's absence—Longchamp deposed—John's treachery—Intrigues of the French King Philip Augustus—Story of Richard and Blondel—Release and return of Richard—John's submission—Outlaws in English forests—Death of Richard I. in 1199.

BEFORE he quitted Europe for the Holy Land, King Richard had appointed two clergymen, Hugh, Bishop of Durham, and William de Longchamp, Bishop of Ely, as guardians of England. Upon his own brother John (or Lackland, as that prince was called), upon whom he had with great liberality bestowed the barony of Mortaigne, in Normandy, Richard had little reliance. He therefore bound John by a promise not to visit England till the king himself should return; but John, who never scrupled to break his word when falsehood suited his purpose, did not keep faith on this occasion.

The two justiciaries were very active in levying taxes. William de Longchamp especially signalized himself by exactions and oppressions; and Prince John took advantage of a quarrel consequent upon Longchamp's tyranny to come to London, in defiance of the promise he had given to Richard. John convoked the barons and bishops, and in their assembly accused William de Longchamp of having abused the power intrusted to him by the king. Longchamp shut himself up in the Tower of London.

The barons now determined to depose Longchamp; and to make their cause stronger, they summoned the citizens of London to deliberate in the council with them. The citizens came joyfully, for this was an honour they had not yet enjoyed. William de Longchamp was declared deposed.

He tried to escape from England in disguise, with a woman's skirt over his clothes, and a thick veil on his head; and under his arm he carried a roll of cloth, as if he had been a dealer. But he spoke no English; and when some women asked him the price of his cloth, his

ignorance betrayed him. He was made prisoner, and prevented from leaving the kingdom until he had given up the keys of all the king's castles.

The country was in a very unsettled state. Prince John began to hope that he should be able to keep the power that he had seized on the deposition of Longchamp, and strove to attach some of the barons to his side. Especially was he anxious for the help of the King of France; and Philip was very glad of a chance to injure King Richard. Thus a compact was made between King Philip of France and Prince John of England, the treacherous John promising that if he could gain possession of England through Philip's aid, he would give up nearly the whole of Normandy and the rest of the territories in France, and hold England itself as the vassal and liegeman of the French king. Considering that it was for a long time a great matter of doubt in England what had become of Richard, John might have succeeded in his bad scheme had he possessed energy and courage. But no one had any confidence in him: and Richard was right, when, on hearing of John's designs, he said, "My brother John is not a man to conquer kingdoms."

After a long time it became known in England that Richard was held captive in Germany. Leopold of Austria had been compelled to deliver him up to Henry VI., Emperor of Germany; and the King of France tried every means to induce the emperor to keep Richard in captivity, and prevent him from returning to England.

There is a pretty story told by a French romancer, to the effect that Richard's place of captivity was discovered by means of a favourite page named Blondel, who travelled from castle to castle, singing, in front of each, a song known only to the king and himself; and that at last, on singing the first verse of the song in front of the castle of Dürrenstein, on the Danube, he heard the voice of the Royal prisoner singing the second verse from his dungeon; and thus the joyful Blondel knew that his lion-hearted master was yet alive. But there are no proofs that this pretty story is true.

Certain it is, however, that the Emperor of Germany made Richard appear as a captive before the Imperial Council in the city of Worms. Many charges were brought against him; but Richard defended himself



BLONDEL DISCOVERS THE PLACE OF RICHARD'S CONFINEMENT.

with so much dignity and firmness, that many of his hearers were melted to tears, and all present were convinced of his innocence. After this, the emperor was obliged to promise that he would release Richard, on the king's paying a hundred thousand marks of silver. This ransom was partly collected in England from the people, and partly raised by gifts contributed by the clergy and by a number of ladies.

At length, after an absence of more than three years, Richard landed in England, where he was received with shouts of welcome. Prince John's followers at once deserted their weak leader, who was glad to throw himself at his brother's feet, and entreat forgiveness for his treachery. Richard generously forgave him, merely observing, "I hope I may as soon forget his offences, as he will my pardon." It would have been well had the king behaved with justice to the purchasers of the domains he had sold before setting out on the Crusade, and whom he now greatly astonished by taking back the lands he had sold; declaring that the buyers had repaid themselves for the money they had paid out of the revenue of the estates. In those days the man who had most power generally made his claim good; in fact, Might was Right.

Richard had pardoned John; but he was not disposed to let his rival Philip escape so easily. He waged a successful war in France, caused Philip to rue the day when he allied himself with the weak and vicious John, and severely punished those who had risen against their liege lord during his captivity.

Thus King Richard passed his time in wars abroad; and things wore an unquiet aspect at home. The country was oppressed by tax-gatherers, who wrung from the people large sums for the payment of the king's expenses, and for the part of his ransom that remained unpaid. In London itself there were frequent fights in broad daylight; and after curfew no man could walk the streets without danger of being robbed and murdered. In the forests were still to be found bands of outlaws, who determined not to submit to the Norman oppressors, and who lived in the greenwood, plundering the rich abbots and the king's officers who fell into their power, while the people secretly rejoiced at their successes, and made heroes of them. The most famous of these outlaws was Robin Hood, who dwelt with his men in Sherwood Forest, and about



RICHARD PARDONS JOHN.

## DEATH OF RICHARD—JOHN'S ACCESSION.

whom many ballads have been written. Others were Adam Bell, Clym of the Clough, and William Cloudesley, who dwelt in Inglewood Forest. William, called "Longbeard," was another hero, who took the part of the Saxons in London, where he was at length cruelly put to death.

Richard's reign had been passed in deeds of violence, and it came to a violent end. In the year 1199, the Count of Limoges, one of his vassals, found a treasure, of which he sent Richard a part. But the avaricious king swore he would have the whole, and attacked the count's castle of Chaluz, declaring he would put the whole garrison to death. An archer named Bertrand de Gourdon shot him in the arm with an arrow. The wound grew rapidly worse; and in a few days Richard died. He was a brave man, but one totally devoid of that higher and nobler kind of courage which would have enabled him to conquer his own passions and vices.

## CHAPTER V.

### KING JOHN.

John's defective title—Arthur of Bretagne and Philip of France—Arthur taken prisoner—His death—Loss of Normandy—Disgust of the Barons—John's extortions—Quarrel with Pope Innocent III.—The Interdict.

KING RICHARD I. left no son to succeed him; for his marriage with the Princess Berengaria of Navarre had brought him no children. The next heir to the throne, therefore, was young Arthur of Bretagne, the son of Richard's dead brother Geoffrey; for according to the feudal law, the son of an elder brother succeeded to an inheritance before a younger brother. Richard had, in the early part of his reign, solemnly declared young Arthur to be his heir; but in a will he made a year before his death, he named his brother John as his successor. It is thought his will was made on the persuasion of his mother, the old dowager Queen Eleanor, who detested Constance of Bretagne, the mother of young Arthur.

## ARTHUR CLAIMS THE THRONE—HIS DEATH.

If John had possessed the respect and good-will of his vassals, they might have given him their obedience cheerfully, on the strength of his brother's will. But John had made himself detested by all classes; and the foreign barons refused him their homage, and appealed to the King of France to support Arthur's claim. Philip, who saw a prospect of advantage for himself in this affair, took up Arthur's cause against the King of England. But John appeased him by advantageous offers; and Philip, who in reality cared little for Arthur or his claims, was but a false friend to the young prince, and deserted him in his utmost need. But while he despoiled Arthur of his heritage, Philip was profuse in words of endearment. He caused Arthur to be educated with his own son Louis, and seemed to be acting in his interests. And when, in the year 1202, the tyranny and falsehood of John raised a general revolt in Poitou and his other French provinces, Philip broke the peace he had concluded, and prepared actively to combat the English king.

At first the Poitevins seemed likely to be successful; and young Arthur, joining them with a number of soldiers, attempted to take the town and castle of Mirebeau, where the old dowager Queen Eleanor dwelt. She had never been friendly to him, and he hoped to take her prisoner. But, for once, John showed something like energy. He fell upon Arthur with an army, routed the young prince's men, and took him away captive to Normandy. What became of Arthur was never precisely known. It was asserted by the Normans that the Prince of Bretagne fell sick at Rouen, and died; while others spread a rumour of his having been dashed to pieces in attempting to clamber over the walls of his prison. But the Bretons, Arthur's subjects, told a very different story of his death; and as John was known to be capable of every kind of wickedness, their account gained the greater amount of belief. They declared that Arthur was shut up in the castle of Falaise, whither his cruel uncle dispatched a murderer to slay him. But Hubert de Burgh, the governor of the castle, wished to save the young prince, and therefore undertook to execute John's commands. He pretended that he had killed Arthur, and even had a mock funeral celebrated; but the reproaches of the Bretons, who were furious at the murder of their prince, induced him to tell the truth, and avow that Arthur yet lived.

Unfortunately, the fact reached the ears of John, who forthwith removed Arthur to Rouen. Thither he came in the night-time; and it is said that he stabbed his nephew to the heart with his own dagger. Such was the tale told in France; and, true or false, it brought great advantage to the cunning King Philip.

For the French vassals of King John were enraged at the wickedness of the man who could with his own hand slay his brother's son. The times were rude and cruel; but this action inspired horror even then. To avenge the death of their unfortunate prince, the Bretons took up arms, at the invitation of King Philip, who himself appeared with an army in John's province of Poitou. The inhabitants joined him, and he next marched to attack Normandy itself. Towns were taken and villages burnt, and one place after another fell into Philip's hands; but King John seemed satisfied with his possession of England; and, to the disgust of his barons, left his vassals in Normandy to shift for themselves, showing not the slightest disposition to march to their assistance. At last even Rouen, the Norman capital, was attacked. John had already fled from Normandy, like a coward; but the citizens of Rouen were still ready to fight for him, if he would only send them some assistance. They therefore proposed to Philip to surrender, unless they obtained relief within thirty days; and sent a pressing embassy to England, entreating John to send them aid without delay. The envoys found the king playing at chess. He finished his game, and then coolly informed them that he could send them no assistance within the time they named, and that, therefore, they must do as best they could. Hereupon they surrendered to the French king; and Philip had the great satisfaction of seeing the rich and flourishing province of Normandy, which had been a powerful separate government for three hundred years, reduced to subjection under the French crown. Certainly no English king but John would have given up such a possession so easily.

The barons were justly angry with John for his conduct in this French war. He was continually extorting large sums from them, and, indeed, from all classes of his subjects, under pretence of regaining what had been lost in France; but from every expedition on which he embarked, he returned covered with shame and disgrace; so that his vassals and



## ENGLAND LAID UNDER AN INTERDICT.

subjects lost whatever small remains of respect they might have had for him. His predecessors had oppressed their subjects, but at least they had been brave and warlike men; and in those days bravery covered a great deal of injustice, as has been seen in the case of Cœur de Lion, who was always respected and honoured, however rapacious he showed himself. But John took his subjects' money, and gave them nothing but defeat in return.

In the year 1207 a quarrel commenced between John and the great Pope Innocent III. The strife lasted some years. Its origin was in John's refusal to acknowledge a priest named Stephen Langton, whom Innocent had appointed Archbishop of Canterbury. The Pope laid the kingdom under an INTERDICT. All religious services except baptism and marriages were interdicted or forbidden. The churches were shut up, and the bells were taken from them. The dead were buried in ditches and fields, instead of in the churchyards; and everything wore an appearance of gloom and dejection. Still John remained obstinate, and at length the Pope excommunicated him. A man excommunicated was in those days considered as shut out from all society or communion with Christians; his possessions might be taken away from him, and he could not appeal to the law to protect him; and if he were a king, his subjects were commanded to obey him no longer.

## CHAPTER VI.

### KING JOHN'S REIGN CONCLUDED.

Continued quarrel between Innocent III. and the King—Philip Augustus invited to invade England—John's submission to the Pope—His renewed tyranny—Revolt of the Barons under Fitzwalter—Signing of Magna Charta—Fury of the King—His oppressions—His death.

FOR some years the quarrel between the Pope and King John remained unsettled. John disregarded the menaces of the Pope, procured some priests who celebrated divine service in spite of the interdict, and sought

to distract the attention of nobles and people from the question at issue by expeditions against the Welsh, Irish, and Scotch. But Pope Innocent was a dangerous enemy. Even Philip Augustus, the wily and energetic King of France, had been obliged to submit to his power; and he was determined that the King of England should not defy him unpunished. John, moreover, contributed greatly to his own ruin by his senseless tyranny and extravagance. He made enemies of the nobles, who might have upheld his authority, robbing some and imprisoning others; and, thus, when the sentence of excommunication was passed upon him, he had no friends left; and when the Pope followed up this sentence by declaring John deposed, no man raised his hand in favour of the wicked king. Innocent III., who declared that, as Pope, he had a right to dispose of the territories of excommunicated princes, formally bestowed John's kingdom upon Philip Augustus of France, who called together a large army to take possession of the gift thus granted to him. Then John lost heart, and made an abject submission to the Pope. He resigned his crown into the hands of Pandulph, Cardinal of Milan, whom Innocent had sent over as his ambassador or legate, and promised, if the Pope would be reconciled to him, to hold England as the vassal or servant of the Roman pontiff, to recall all the priests he had sent away, and to pay an immense sum as satisfaction for the money he had extorted. Thereupon Innocent pardoned him, and recalled the gift he had made to Philip of France.

You may imagine that Philip was very angry at being thus thwarted. He declared that he would not be a mere tool in the hands of the Pope, and prepared to invade England on his own account. But his fleet was partly destroyed by the Earl of Salisbury; and with a heart full of bitterness and wrath the French king was obliged for the time to give up the project of conquering England, and to wait till John's tyranny and oppression should give him another chance. These events occurred in the year 1213.

Relieved for a time from his fears, and fancying that the Pope was strong enough to protect him from all foes, John now entered upon a new and more aggravated course of tyranny and oppression, treating his subjects generally as if they were his natural enemies, and drawing upon him-



JOHN SURRENDERING HIS CROWN TO PANDULPH.

## THE GREAT CHARTER.

self the hatred of all classes alike. During the whole of the year 1214, the discontent in England was increasing, and the barons at length began to form a strong league against the wicked king. One baron, Fitzwalter by name, whom John had deeply injured, acted as leader; and Stephen Langton, the new Archbishop of Canterbury, gave all his influence to aid the barons, who now called themselves *the Army of God and of Holy Church*. John tried to set the league at defiance, but found himself deserted. The Londoners took part with the nobles, and the king was left at Odiham, in Hampshire, with only seven knights to attend him. Then, at last, he consented to a conference with the barons, to discuss and redress the grievances of which they complained.

This meeting of the king and the barons is a very important event in the history of England. It was held in a meadow called Runnymede, near Windsor; and here the barons compelled the king to sign a memorial, which is known in history as the GREAT CHARTER.

The importance of this document lay in the fact that it contained certain conditions which the king was bound to observe in government, and which prevented him from ruling entirely according to his own will and caprice. It prevented the king from exacting, as he had frequently done, any sum he chose to levy upon a son who wanted to inherit his father's estate; or upon a widow who wished to marry again, or to avoid marrying any one whom the king had chosen to be her husband. The liberties and privileges granted to the cities were insured to them. The courts of justice were to try the cases of all men who appeared before them. Punishments were to be in proportion to the faults committed. No freeman was to be imprisoned, or to suffer damage by fine or otherwise, contrary to the law. Ruinous fines were to be levied no longer; and even the poor peasant or villain was not to be deprived of his implements of husbandry. These are a few of the enactments of the Great Charter, which was a great step towards restoring to the English that freedom which their ancestors had enjoyed under the Saxon Alfred, and of which the Norman rule had deprived them.

John tried in several ways to avoid signing the Great Charter; but the barons were firm, and would accept no compromise. So he put his name to the document, and then went away to Windsor in a rage. From



KING JOHN SIGNING MAGNA CHARTA.

## FRESH REVOLT OF THE BARONS—DEATH OF JOHN.

thence he retired secretly to the Isle of Wight; and, on the arrival of some foreign troops, whom he had found means to hire, he commenced a march across the kingdom, treating it as if it were an enemy's country, plundering and burning wherever he went, and actually setting fire in the morning to the house that had sheltered him at night.

The natural consequence of this proceeding was that the barons revolted anew. A number of them invited Louis, the eldest son of the French King Philip, to come to England, and claim the crown which John had so often shown himself unworthy to wear. Louis came to England accordingly, and actually entered London; but he did not trust the barons, nor had they any real confidence in him. France and England had so often been enemies, that it was difficult for them to unite in friendship at a moment's notice. The alliance with Louis was a desperate measure, induced by the unbearable tyranny of the king. Louis, like the Empress Maude in the old days, began to carry matters with too high a hand, and affected to dispose of England before he had conquered it, like the man who sold the bear's skin while the beast was yet alive. Many nobles quitted him in disgust, and prepared to join the king.

But John's career of wickedness was near its close. He had retired into the eastern counties, carrying with him the old records of the kingdom, and his crown and the most valuable of his jewels. As he attempted to cross the Wash, on the borders of Lincolnshire, the tide rose and carried away all his baggage and treasures. The king escaped, and hurried on to Swinstead Abbey, where he stopped to dine. It is said that a monk poisoned him. Be this as it may, he was seized with sudden and violent sickness, of which he died, at Newark, in 1216, after a wretched reign of about seventeen years.

King John is esteemed the worst king who ever sat on the English throne. But Providence frequently brings forth good out of evil, and thus it was in the case of this bad king. Ordinary tyranny might have been patiently endured; but the unparalleled cruelty and wickedness of John was the immediate cause that gave to England the invaluable boon of the GREAT CHARTER.

## CHAPTER VII.

### HENRY III.

Importance of Henry's reign—Parliaments—Regency of Pembroke—Henry governs for himself—His foolish proceedings—Preference for foreigners—Exactions and extravagance—The throne of Sicily—Simon de Montfort—His discontent—Injustice towards the citizens of London and towards the Jews

THE reign of Henry of Winchester, John's eldest son, shows us the picture of a weak foolish king, utterly unfitted to rule a great nation, or to keep in subjection a turbulent nobility and discontented citizens. Consequently the nobility rise up against him, and the country is filled with violence and bloodshed. Yet great importance is rightly attached to this dreary reign; for now we find that the feudal government has ceased. *Parliaments*, which give to the gentry and the burghers a share in the government of the country, are summoned, as the old Witenagemote used to be called together in Saxon times; and the dawn of a happier and brighter day chases away the clouds of the gloomy feudal period, when might had been mis-named right, and oppression was called government.

Thus from evil came forth good; from the imbecility of the king and the discontent of the nobles, the reconstruction of Parliament and the commencement of the power of the *English House of Commons*.

King Henry III. was only eight years old when his father John died, unloved and unregretted, at Newark. It was requisite, therefore, to appoint a regent, who should rule in the young monarch's name. William, Earl of Pembroke, filled this office with honour and advantage for four years. A great council of the barons chose him Protector of the realm; and by his death, which happened in 1319, the young Henry lost a wise counsellor and a true and faithful friend. For it was Pembroke who appeased the discontented barons who had revolted against John, by promising that the young prince who had now succeeded to the throne should be taught to rule with justice and equity.

It was Pembroke who caused the Great Charter and the Forest Charter to be confirmed, and thus removed a great cause for hatred and rebellion. It was Pembroke, finally, who routed with great slaughter the French army of Louis the Dauphin, son of Philip Augustus, who had invaded England with the avowed intention of seizing the crown. This defeat, which took place at Lincoln, compelled Louis to quit the country: and since that time no attempt has ever been made from France to conquer England.

In 1223 Henry took the government of the country into his own hands; and weak hands they were to rule a great nation. Though he had not the more cruel and odious of the vices of his father John, Henry often rendered himself hateful by his rapacity and extravagance. He was fond of fine clothes and costly entertainments; and his wife, Eleanor of Provence, whom he married in 1236, was as wasteful as he. When the king found himself embarrassed for money (and he was almost always in embarrassment), he often resorted to harsh and unjust means to supply his wants. Sometimes he extorted large sums, under the name of presents, from the citizens of London. Sometimes he plundered the Jews, herein following the example of his father John, who had robbed that unfortunate community to a large extent; and on one occasion he obtained much money by announcing that he was going to set out on a Crusade; but when he had collected all he could, he said nothing more concerning his project. This conduct could not fail to give rise to discontent among the barons and people; and at last this discontent ripened into a rebellion.

Henry was foolish enough to show a great preference for foreigners, especially for some friends whom his wife, Eleanor, brought with her from Provence. Offices and dignities were heaped upon these strangers, and the native nobility found themselves neglected. They addressed strong remonstrances to the king, and even threatened to depose him; but Henry was too weak to learn wisdom by experience; and though the first discontents were quelled, the cause remained, and every year his government became more odious to almost every class.

The Pope was at this time the most powerful prince in Europe, and claimed the right of giving away thrones and sceptres at his will.



Accordingly, he offered the crown of Sicily to Henry's second son, Edmund; and Henry, thinking this would be a desirable possession, eagerly accepted the offer for his son. But here the proverb held good—"All is not gold that glitters." The prince met with such powerful opposition, that he could never take possession of his throne; and Henry, instead of gaining, found himself a considerable loser, having to pay a large sum of money for an expedition which ended in failure. But, by an ingenious device, King Henry extorted the necessary money from the English clergy; so that, personally, he lost little by his foolish scheme.

All this misgovernment and favouritism could not fail to produce disturbances sooner or later. But it was hardly to be expected that, when rebellion at last broke out, one of the king's prime favourites would be at its head. Such was, however, the case. Among the foreigners whom Eleanor of Provence brought to England, when she came to marry the king, was a young nobleman named Simon de Montfort. King Henry took a great liking to this stranger, created him Earl of Leicester, and put him into a place of trust. In 1252 De Montfort was sent to Gascony, where disturbances had broken out. The haughty baron behaved very tyrannically, oppressing and plundering the people. Complaints of his conduct reached the ears of the king, and on De Montfort's return, Henry reproached him with his evil doings. But Simon de Montfort had been too quickly raised to power to be able to receive rebuke. He replied, boldly and rebelliously, "If thou wert not my sovereign, I would make thee eat thy words;" and quitted the court, determined to have his revenge upon the king sooner or later.

It is related that, not long after this, the king was one day overtaken, during a progress up the Thames, by a violent thunder-storm; and in great alarm he ordered the rowers to pull to the nearest landing-stairs. It chanced that they landed him close by the castle of the discontented De Montfort. Henry was still more perturbed when he found himself in his enemy's power, and said to the baron, "I fear thee more than all the thunder and lightning in the world." De Montfort, who was not wanting in generosity, emphatically warned the king against the evil counsellors who were ruining him, and then sent him away unharmed.

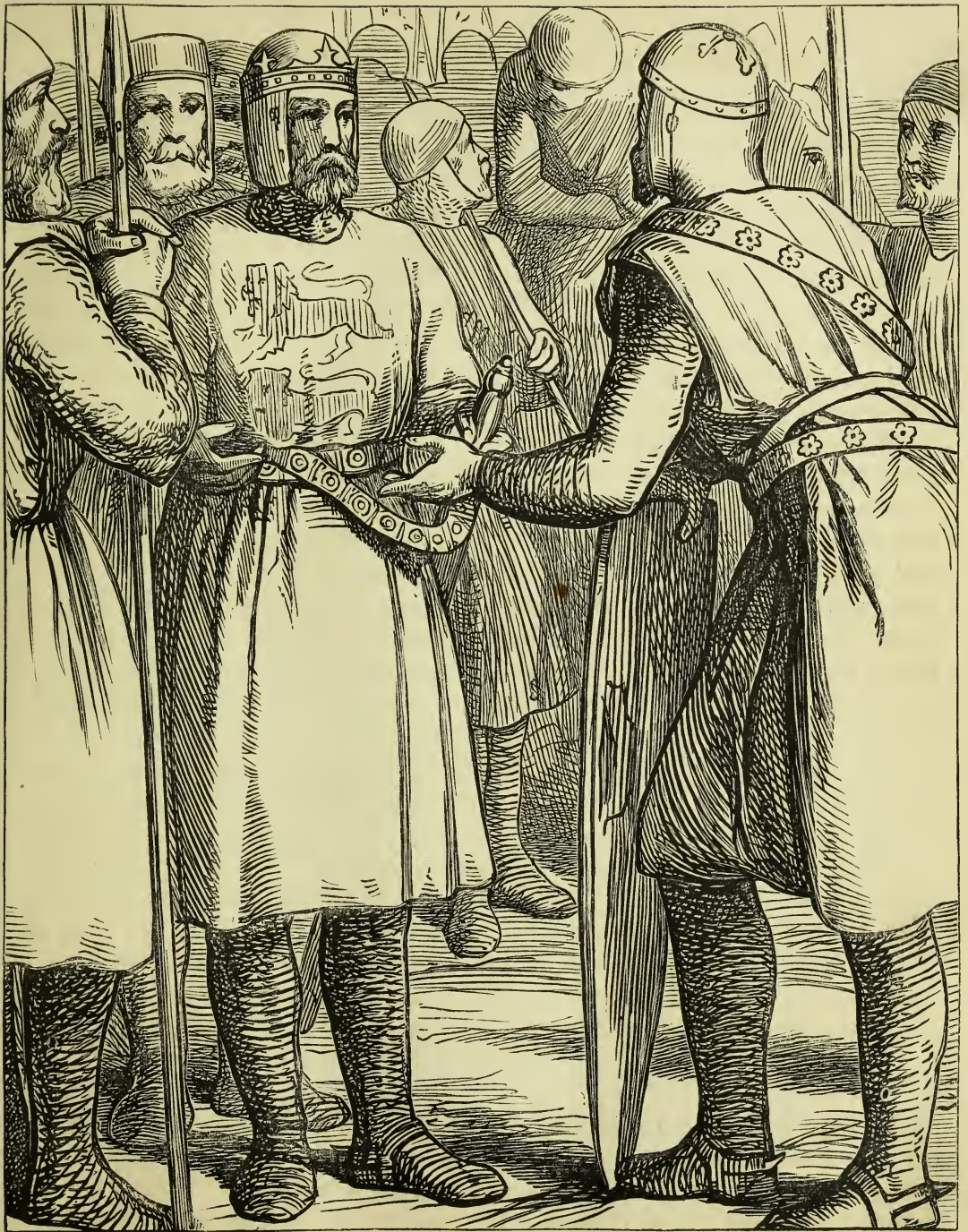
The citizens of London had become powerful by their industry and wealth, and might have proved good friends to the king; but he converted them into enemies by his folly and his exactions. He was continually extorting money from them on one pretence or another; and the more they gave him, the more he craved. He spent enormous sums in dress and jewelry, setting a bad example to his courtiers, who were only too ready to imitate him; he gave the queen a wharf, or hythe, on the banks of the Thames, at which all ships were expected to unload, paying a heavy toll to the queen: and thus, in various ways, he lost the affection of all classes of the English. The Jews, on whom fell the chief share of suffering in those days of bad government, were cruelly persecuted; heavy fines were continually extorted from them, and frequently they had to endure personal ill-usage. Indeed, on one occasion, a number of them were murdered in London. Rapacious and yet feeble, foolishly partial to a few favourites, while he treated his real friends with ingratitude and neglect, King Henry gradually drew upon himself a storm, which burst upon his head with such violence as for a time to sweep him from the throne he disgraced.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE REIGN OF HENRY III. CONCLUDED.

Discontent of the Nobles—Revolt of Simon de Montfort—The battle of Lewes—Imprisonment of the King and the Prince of Wales—Escape of the Prince—Battle of Evesham—De Montfort slain—Progress in England—Prince Edward departs for the Holy Land—Death of the King.

By the oppression exercised by Henry III., and his continual infringement of the Great Charter that had been won from his father John, the patience of the English was at length fairly wearied out. Many were ready to revolt from the weak and worthless king; and there



HENRY III. A PRISONER AT LEWES.

was one man who watched eagerly for an opportunity of bringing about a thorough change in the government. This man was Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester.

When he considered the time had come for action, he called together some of the principal nobles in the kingdom; and they determined that, as the king knew not how to rule alone, they would help him to the best of their power. They came in complete armour to the king's council, and Henry thought they intended to take him prisoner; and, alarmed at their appearance, he consented to call a parliament at Oxford for the redress of grievances. To this parliament the barons brought their military vassals, and the king was really a prisoner in their hands. For some time England was governed by twenty-four nobles. But these barons themselves soon showed an intention to tyrannize over the people; and at length, in the year 1263, a civil war broke out between the king and a number of the barons. Louis IX., King of France, a very pious and virtuous prince, offered to play the part of peacemaker, and tried to bring about a reconciliation between Henry and the rebellious barons; but it was in vain, for the barons who were for the king, and those who stood against him, were both so angry that nothing but the sword could end their quarrel.

The best leader on King Henry's side was his young son, Prince Edward; while De Montfort took the command of the revolting barons. The Londoners, who had been subjected for a long time to the king's extortion and tyranny, almost all took Simon de Montfort's side in the quarrel; the barons of the north, on the other hand, generally remained faithful to Henry. Thus, each side raised an army; and on the 14th of May, 1264, was fought the memorable battle of Lewes, in Sussex.

At first it seemed as if King Henry would gain a great victory over his foes; for Prince Edward, who led the royal forces, attacked a great body of Londoners, who formed part of De Montfort's army, and chased them from the field. But while Prince Edward and his men were pursuing the flying foe, De Montfort himself advanced with a second body of troops, and attacked King Henry in the absence of his son, threw his army into confusion, and took the weak king prisoner. When Prince Edward returned from pursuing the Londoners, he found his father's

army routed, and the king himself in the hands of the enemy. His own followers were too much astonished at what had taken place, to think of renewing the combat. Some of the chief of Edward's friends at once rode down to the coast, and embarked for France; and the young prince was obliged to deliver himself as a prisoner into the hands of De Montfort. Thus, by the disastrous defeat at Lewes, the hopes of the king and his party seemed crushed at one blow.

Leicester was now the most powerful man in England. The great success at Lewes had left him without an enemy fit to appear in the field; and he began to lord it over the country as if he were indeed the king. But the earl was wise enough to see that he must cover his power with some show of justice, if it was to continue. The burghers of London had been his great friends, though they ran away at Lewes. Accordingly, Leicester determined to do something for the class to which they belonged, by summoning a parliament, at which not only the nobles, bishops, and knights, but also a certain number of burgesses or citizens, were invited to attend. Many of those citizens were rich men, and could get their companions to supply the government with money. Thus, even after the death and defeat of Leicester, of which I shall presently have to tell you, they were retained in parliament, where they gave their advice, and voted supplies of money to the king, and were so useful, that they became a great and a very important part of the parliament. So, as good frequently comes out of evil, we find that to the weak reign of the foolish and unstable Henry III. we owe the establishment of what is now the most powerful assembly in the world—the COMMONS HOUSE OF PARLIAMENT.

Leicester now began to disgust even the barons, his friends, by his tyranny. Trusting to the help of his parliament, and to the support of the rich Londoners in particular, he behaved haughtily and unjustly to several great nobles, who quitted his party in disgust. The king's friends, on the other hand, took heart when they saw matters going badly with Leicester. Prince Edward was provided with a fleet horse, on which he managed to escape from the custody of De Montfort. The Earl of Gloucester raised an army for the prince, and Edward marched against Simon de Montfort before that nobleman knew that any danger

was threatening him. Prince Edward encountered the Londoners, and defeated them. Then, bearing the banners he had taken from them in front of his army, he marched onward against the Earl of Leicester, who at first, deceived by the stratagem, thought his good friends the Londoners were coming to his assistance. On finding his mistake, he exclaimed, "The Lord have mercy on our souls, for I find our bodies are the prince's." With a weakened and famished army he was obliged to encounter the victorious forces of the prince at Evesham; and this battle was even more disastrous to Leicester than that of Lewes had been to King Henry. His troops gave way almost at once. Great was the slaughter among his friends and followers; and Leicester himself, and his son, were slain in the heat of the combat. The old king narrowly escaped a similar fate, by crying out that he was Henry of Winchester. This battle was fought in 1265.

Thus ended Simon de Montfort's rebellion. But though the king regained his authority, the people had gained a great point in the fact that burgesses were admitted to parliament. The government could now no longer be carried on merely by the king and nobles, in the old feudal style. The Commons were not slow to find out that by refusing to grant money to the king, they could exert a great power in the state; and to this right they held fast; gaining one step after another, until, as you will find when we get further on in history, their power equalled that of the king and the nobles. The English nation was now also beginning to free itself from the tyranny of the Pope at Rome, whose interference in the affairs of the state the government would no longer endure: and this was another good feature in Henry's long and dreary reign.

Prince Edward now left his father to govern alone, and departed for the Holy Land, to take part, with Louis IX., King of France, in the last Crusade. He nearly lost his life in that expedition, for a murderer stabbed him with a poisoned dagger; and we are told that Edward's devoted wife Philippa saved his life by sucking the poison from the wound. Under the rule of the aged and feeble Henry, the country again fell into a state of great confusion and misery. Even knights and esquires were among those who lived by robbery; and justice and law were rarely to be had. The old king himself, heavily in debt, was



SIMON DE MONTFORT SLAIN AT EVESHAM.

accustomed to lay the counties, towns, and cities under contribution for the provisions his household consumed; and it is a bad thing for a nation when the king cannot pay for his dinner. At length, in 1272, King Henry died after a long but inglorious reign; and on the accession of his brave son Edward, the English soon found they had a very different kind of king—one who had a strong head to plan, and a stout heart to fight, and who could prove himself in character, as well as in name, a worthy member of the brave house of Plantagenet.



## PART IV. THE EDWARDS.

### CHAPTER I.

#### EDWARD I.

The King's energy and courage—The peace of the country secured—Persecution and banishment of the Jews—Wars with the Welsh—Death of Llewellyn—Conquest of Wales—Edward of Carnarvon first English Prince of Wales—Edward's contempt for finery.

IN the two hundred years that had elapsed since the Norman Conquest, no prince had brought to the throne so high a character as Edward I. had now already earned for himself. He was so well known as a man of courage and energy, that though he was absent from England when the old king died, barons and people alike prepared to submit to his authority, and no attempt was made to disturb the young king or to dispute his succession to his father's throne.

The feeble reign of Henry III. had left the country in a very lawless state; but Edward fell to work to set matters right. He sent some of his lords into the western counties, with a commission to hear the com-



plaints of all who had been wronged, and to execute justice upon all offenders. People in those times had rather rough ideas of justice, and it is probable that sometimes the innocent were made to suffer with the guilty; but even the hasty sentences pronounced by Edward's commissioners were better than the utter lawlessness that had spread everywhere during the last reign; and in a short time the evildoers were so terrified at the king's swift and strong measures, that the kingdom was brought into something like order. Everywhere the heavy hand and the keen courage of Edward made themselves felt; and for the first time since the death of Henry II. the English had a monarch who was really at the head of the nation.

Unfortunately, in his dealings with one class of his subjects, the king seems to have entirely forgotten justice and mercy. The Jews, who in former reigns had often been made to suffer oppression and wrong, had still contrived to maintain themselves in England, and even to grow rich; but Edward attacked them with merciless rigour. The unhappy Hebrews were accused of defacing the coin of the realm; and 280 of them were hanged at one time in London. The others were deprived of their possessions, and banished from the kingdom. Fifteen thousand of the Jewish nation left the shores of Britain; the king seized their wealth, leaving them only a small sum to pay expenses; and of even this they were in many instances robbed; for the people of the seaport towns faithfully imitated their master.

Edward's ancestors had at one time been masters of more than half of France; but these foreign possessions had been lost, and only Guienne remained under the English rule. Edward determined to make up for this loss of territory abroad, by increasing his power at home. His object was, doubtless, to make himself king over the whole of the British isles; and the wealth obtained from the plundered Jews gave him the means of furnishing an army. And now he turned his ambitious thoughts to the conquest of Wales.

The Welsh had been for many centuries under the rule of princes of their own, and had seldom been molested in their mountains. Sometimes there was fighting on the borders of their rocky land, with some great Norman noble whose estates reached to the Welsh borders; but

beyond this there had been no warfare. The Welsh were a brave, fiery people, strong, active, and fond of fighting, but quite unable to withstand such an army as Edward could bring against them. The king soon found a cause of quarrel against Llewellyn, the Welsh prince. Llewellyn was defeated by Edward's army and forced to make submission; but soon afterwards he revolted. Then Edward marched against him with such a force as had never before been seen in Wales. The Welsh fought bravely, and their bards or minstrels urged them on to resist the oppressor. But Edward's power was too strong for them; and at length Llewellyn was slain, and the Welsh were at the conqueror's mercy.

Mercy was not among the English king's good qualities; and wise and brave though he was, he never hesitated to shed blood when an advantage was to be gained. He knew that the Welsh bards loved freedom, and that they would probably excite their defeated countrymen to revolt. Therefore he summoned them to assemble together, and caused his men to fall upon the defenceless minstrels and slay them. It was a cruel and ruthless deed; but those were hard, rough times, and all means were considered fair by which an enemy could be subdued or a discontented vassel kept in subjection.

A second scheme of Edward's, for keeping the Welsh from revolt, was more ingenious, and had the advantage of being free from cruelty. He knew the objection the Welsh entertained to being governed by a stranger; he therefore called their chief men together, and promised to give them a prince born in Wales, and who could not speak a word of English. The vanquished Welshmen were delighted at the prospect of obtaining such a ruler; when, behold, the cunning conqueror presented to them his own son Edward, an infant, who had been born at Carnarvon Castle some time before, and who certainly could not speak English, or indeed any other language, by reason of his tender age. The Welsh, however, made the best of their bargain; and indeed, the union of their country with England proved after a time very advantageous to them. Since that day the eldest son of the King of England has always borne the title of Prince of Wales.

This conquest greatly heightened the respect the English had for their king. Courage and skill in war had always been highly prized among



EDWRAD I. PRESENTING HIS SON TO THE WELSH.

## EDWARD RESOLVES TO CONQUER SCOTLAND.

them, and could make even a Richard Cœur de Lion popular; but in Edward's case those qualities were joined to a real wish for the welfare of the state, and for the improvement of the law. On one occasion, when he found the judges had been receiving bribes, he punished them very severely; on another, when a bishop found fault with him for going about dressed in plain clothes, in contrast to his father Henry III., who had always been famous for the costly jewels with which he decked himself out, Edward replied, "What more could I do in royal robes than I can do in this plain gaberdine?"

## CHAPTER II.

### THE REIGN OF EDWARD I. CONTINUED.

Edward interferes in the affairs of Scotland—Baliol and Bruce—Abdication of Baliol—Victories of Edward in Scotland—Sir William Wallace—His valiant exploits—Victory at Cambuskenneth—Wallace betrayed and executed—Rise of Robert Bruce—Death of Edward I.

EDWARD was not satisfied with the conquest of Wales. Scotland offered a greater prize to him; and on this his ambitious mind was fixed. A favourable opportunity soon presented itself for interference in the affairs of the northern kingdom. The King of Scotland was dead, and the young Princess of Norway, who was his heir, died soon after him. There were now several nobles, each of whom had some claim to the crown; and the chief among these were John Baliol and Robert Bruce. The claims of these two men were almost equal; and the question as to which of them was to have the throne was referred to Edward.

The English king was rejoiced at this reference; and he began by declaring that he, as King of England, was feudal lord or sovereign of the King of Scotland; and, though most of the nobles indignantly denied that he possessed any such right, he bestowed the crown upon Baliol, who was weak enough to promise that he would wear it as Edward's vassal. The feeble Scottish king was thereupon compelled to follow

his patron to London, and to appear as a private person before the peers at Westminster. In fact, Edward took every means to degrade him in the eyes of the Scotch, in hopes that they might be induced to prefer a valorous English king to a feeble Scotch one.

At length Baliol, wearied out by the insults he was made to undergo, took advantage of a quarrel which had occurred between Edward and Philip, the fourth King of France, to form an alliance with the French king. When Edward heard of this, he summoned Baliol to do homage to him; and upon the Scottish king's refusal, marched northward with a great army. Baliol did his best to oppose the invader. The armies met at Dunbar, in Southern Scotland, April 27th, 1296, and the Scotch under Baliol were completely defeated, and a great number of them were slain. One castle after another fell into Edward's hands; and John Baliol, finding all was lost, made submission to the English king, formally abdicated the crown of Scotland, and retired to a foreign land, whence he never returned. The whole of Scotland was now at Edward's mercy, for not an army could be raised to oppose him. He, for his part, considered the conquest complete, and prepared to return with his army into England, leaving a great nobleman, Earl Warrenne, in Scotland as governor. He carried away with him the great stone on which the Scottish kings sat when they were crowned. This stone is now in the coronation chair in Westminster Abbey.

For some time the Scotch remained quiet; but soon the tyranny of two men, Ormesby and Cressingham, filled them with anger and hatred; and just when they were thinking whether it were possible to break the chain wherewith the conqueror had bound them, there arose a man who showed them how men should fight for their country. This man was Sir William Wallace.

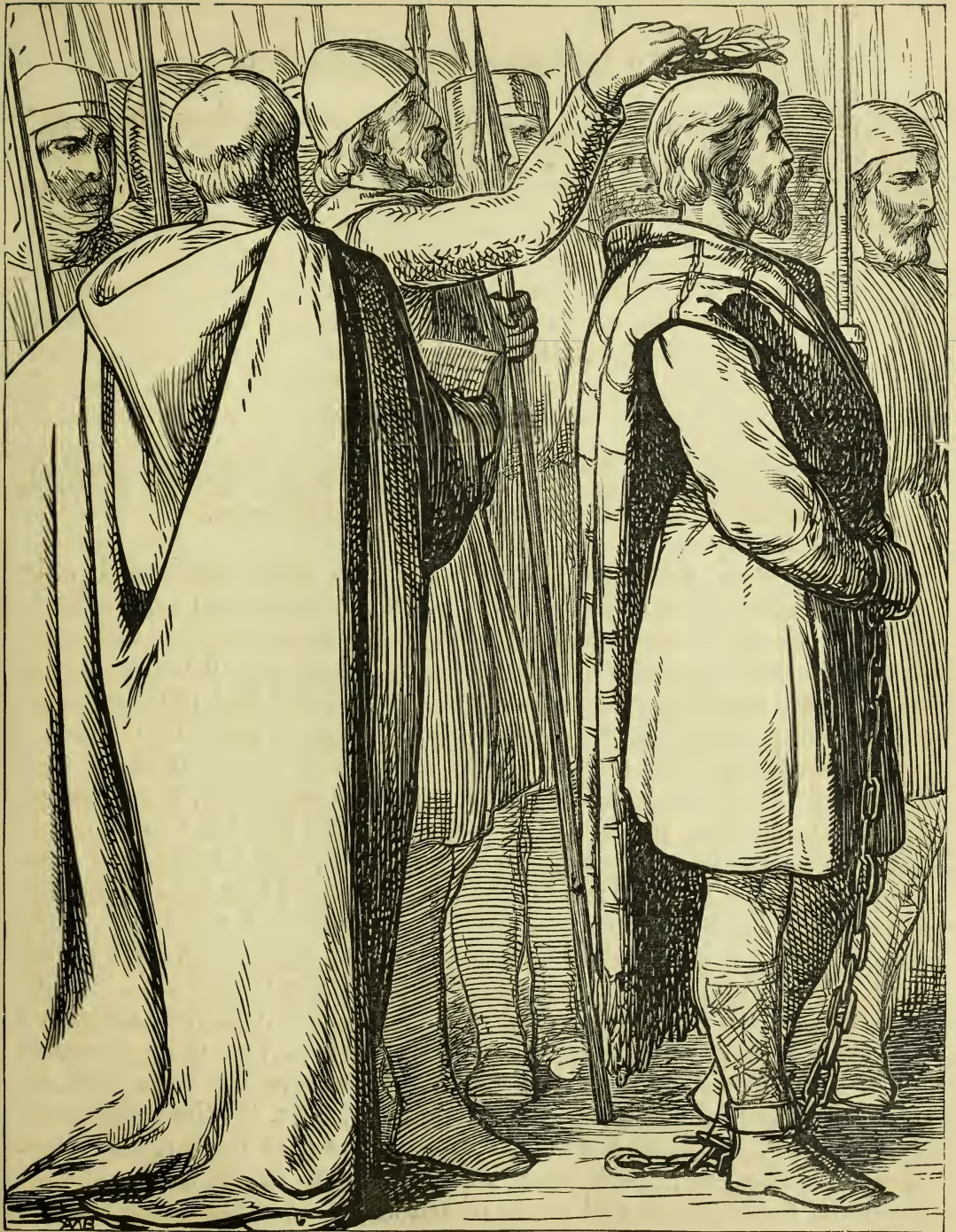
The great hero of Scotland, whose memory is still revered among his countrymen, chanced to be involved in a quarrel with an English soldier, who insulted and attempted to rob him, and whom he slew. Thereupon, placing himself at the head of a band of daring men, he became formidable to the English by his valiant exploits. Gigantic in stature, and as brave and hardy as he was tall, he was also distinguished by skill and aptitude in the art of war; and at length, in sheer wonder and

## CAPTURE AND EXECUTION OF WALLACE—ROBERT BRUCE.

delight at his successes, many noblemen joined him with their followers. At Cambuskenneth he gained a great victory over the English; and among the dead was the odious Cressingham, whom the Scots actually flayed, that they might make his skin into girths for their horses. Wallace then marched southward into England, laid waste the country as far as Durham, and retreated into Scotland laden with spoil.

But in the meantime, at the news of these unexampled successes of Wallace, Edward had returned from Flanders. At this time, when everything depended upon union among the Scottish nobles, many of them, jealous of the great fame of Wallace, refused to serve under him; and the hero resigned his command, though he remained with his troop to help his ill-judging and ungrateful countrymen. Edward marched rapidly northward with his army; and at Falkirk a great battle was fought on the 22nd of July, 1298. The Scotch were routed, chiefly through the skill of the English bowmen, who were already becoming famous. The Scotch fled in confusion, but Wallace still managed to keep his band together. For a long time he eluded all the efforts of Edward to capture him; until at length he was betrayed into the conqueror's hands by his trusted but treacherous friend, Sir John Menteith, after the Scotch had a second time submitted to the English rule. Edward behaved cruelly and ruthlessly towards his gallant foe. Wallace was carried to London, and treated with great indignity, the king endeavouring to brand him as a traitor. He replied, "that he could not be a traitor to the King of England, because the King of England had never been his master." He was executed with great cruelty in the year 1305.

But another champion had now arisen for Scotland in the person of Robert Bruce, grandson of the Bruce who had been a rival of the weak John Baliol. This Robert Bruce, who had been induced to submit to Edward, suddenly appeared in Scotland in 1306, and excited the nobles to take up arms against Edward, who would, he declared, reduce them to the condition of slaves, if they did not stand up for their liberties. For a third time Scotland revolted. Edward, who was now in his sixty-ninth year, once more marched northward with his army, to subdue the rebels; but at Carlisle he was seized with an illness of which he



WALLACE TAKEN TO EXECUTION

died, after exhorting his son Edward never to desist from the Scotch war until the country should be entirely subdued. He was a great and politic king, but cruel and merciless, in an age when, indeed, mercy was almost unknown.

## CHAPTER III.

### EDWARD II.

State of England in the time of Edward II.—Firmness the most necessary quality of a king—Character of Edward—He desists from the conquest of Scotland—Edward's affection for Piers Gaveston—Banishment of Gaveston—His return and execution.

THE times of which we are now speaking were rough and rude. War was the chief occupation of the barons, who could not easily be made to submit to control; and a strong hand was required to keep anything like order among them. In their own castles, and surrounded by their vassals and dependents, they were so powerful that the king could not do much against them. They possessed great herds of cattle and swine, and large flocks of sheep; and many of their serfs or slaves were employed as herdsmen, to drive these creatures to pasture, the oxen and sheep on the thin grass of the vast commons, the hogs in the wide forests that covered a great part of the country; and a number of men-at-arms lounged about in the great halls, leading an idle kind of life, but ready at all times to grasp their bows and battle-axes and broadswords, and follow their lords to the field, and fight as Englishmen have known how to fight from the old Saxon times down to the present day. When autumn came, a great number of oxen, sheep, and hogs were killed and salted; for there was no grass for them, nor were root crops grown to serve them for food during the winter. There was but little corn, for the fields were cultivated in a very rough way. So, till the spring came round again, nearly all the people lived upon salted meat during more than half the year. But there was good store of all in the baron's castle for the retainers, and plenty of red wine for the baron himself and



## CHARACTER OF EDWARD II.

his friends; and the poor wayfarer, who was without a home and without a meal, was sure of food and shelter in the convents. So the people managed to live in a rough way, except when the weather was wet for a long time together, so that the cattle died, and the harvest failed; and then would come a famine, and the people would suffer terribly, many dying of hunger, and still more of diseases brought on by bad and insufficient food.

In such an age, weakness of character was far more likely than tyranny to bring misfortunes upon a king. A monarch who had a heavy hand and a stout heart was certain to be respected, even though his rule might be hard and harsh. If he punished severely and sternly, his subjects would take care how they offended him. If he bravely led them to war, the barons would follow him and admire his courage, while they troubled themselves very little about the justice or injustice of his cause. But a monarch who was weak and yielding had no chance of preserving order among his turbulent vassals. These were certain to begin to despise their king as soon as they ceased to fear him.

All this has been said, that my readers may understand how it was that the reign of Edward II., the king of whom we have now to speak, proved as disastrous as that of his father, the first Edward, had been glorious and renowned.

This poor Edward of Carnarvon could not be called a bad king. He was not rapacious, like Henry III., nor cruel and perfidious, like the tyrant John; but he was indolent and weak, and left his favourites to do the work he should have done himself; and so it came to pass that his favourites were looked on by the nobles with jealousy and hatred, while Edward himself was regarded as a contemptible imbecile, who was unfit to rule, and whom, therefore, no man was bound to obey.

Edward II. was twenty-three years old when he came to the throne. His father had made him promise that he would not cease from warring against the Scots until they were entirely subdued; and Edward had even been made to promise that the corpse of his valiant father should not be buried until Scotland had submitted to the English rule. But Edward forgot his promise so soon as his father's eyes were closed in death; and after marching a little way into Scotland, he suddenly turned

back, made the best of his way to London, and there dismissed his army. The barons were greatly displeased at this strange conduct; and the heroic Robert Bruce, who had determined to persevere until he should gain the crown of Scotland, now saw that the new King of England was a contemptible foe, in comparison to the valiant monarch who had driven him to take refuge in the mountains among the wild beasts.

A weak man who cannot fulfil his duties generally leans for support on some favourite; and, in nine cases out of ten, the favourite he thus chooses is a bad one. Edward was no exception to this rule. Already, as Prince of Wales, he had shown a foolish liking for Piers Gaveston, a Gascon knight; and Edward I. had banished this Gaveston from England, and made the prince promise never to recall him; for he saw that Gaveston was a bad companion for his son. As soon as Edward was seated on the throne, he sent for his dear friend, received him on his arrival with open arms, and bestowed so much wealth and such broad lands upon him, that the nobles were very angry; and not without cause; for they saw a young stranger, who had not yet done anything for England, preferred before the oldest and the best of themselves. Gaveston, by his haughty and insolent behaviour, embittered them still more. The king was now obliged to go over to France to marry Isabella, the sister of the French king; and he appointed Gaveston, the stranger, guardian of England in his absence.

Thereupon the nobles united against the favourite; and the new queen, who saw that her husband preferred Gaveston's company to hers, joined them with right good-will. The Earl of Lancaster, the king's cousin, came to Parliament with a number of nobles, each bringing with him many armed retainers; and they forced the king to consent that Gaveston should be banished the kingdom. Edward promised that Gaveston should go, but evaded his promise by sending him as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, while the barons had intended that their enemy should be sent away to France. In a short time he returned, more insolent than ever, and the foolish king raised him to still greater honours.

Then the barons resolved to rid themselves, once and for ever, of their master's unworthy favourite. As they found the king's word was not to be trusted, they assembled their vassals, and commenced a war against

him, with the Earl of Lancaster for their commander. At last Gaveston was taken prisoner at Scarborough, in Yorkshire, in the year 1312, by the Earl of Pembroke. He was carried off in great haste to Warwick Castle, where, by order of the barons, his head was cut off. Edward vowed vengeance for his favourite's death. But he was too weak to cherish his purpose long, and soon pardoned the barons; so peace was for a time restored.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE REIGN OF EDWARD II. CONCLUDED.

Renewal of the war with Scotland—Battle of Bannockburn, and defeat of the English—The De Spencers—Discontent of the barons—Queen Isabella and Roger Mortimer, Earl of March—Conspiracy against the King—His deposition and death.

ROBERT BRUCE, the Scottish hero, had made good use of his time between the years 1307 and 1312. He had gained great power in Scotland, and found two good and trusty friends in his own brother Edward, and Sir James Douglas, whose family afterwards became very famous in Scotland. Edward II. now determined to make war upon Bruce; and as, after the death of Gaveston, he found the barons willing to follow him once more, he contrived to bring together an army of 100,000 men, and considered himself certain of success. The greatest force Bruce could muster did not amount to a third of the number of Edward's men; but his followers were hardy Scotsmen, whereas many of Edward's followers were savage fellows from Ireland and Wales; and Bruce was a skilful soldier, whereas Edward was as unfit to lead an army as he was to govern a kingdom. The Scottish leader resolved to fight the English army at Bannockburn, near Stirling; and at once took measures to prevent his little army from being surrounded by Edward's great one. He posted his men in such a way that they had a hill to protect them on their right hand, and a morass on their left. In front ran a

## BATTLE OF BANNOCKBURN—GREAT DEFEAT OF THE ENGLISH.

rivulet; and Bruce had caused his soldiers to dig pits near this brook, and to plant in them sharp stakes, and then cover the whole with turf, so that the English horsemen might ride into these pits when they came to attack the Scots. It was already evening when the English came up to where the Scotch army lay encamped. A fight at once took place, in which the Scots had the advantage; and Bruce killed with his battle-axe Sir Henry de Bohun, a valiant English knight.

On the next day, 25th June, 1314, was fought the celebrated battle of Bannockburn. The measures Bruce had taken were crowned with complete success. Headlong into the covered pits fell the English cavalry, writhing among the sharp stakes: the Duke of Gloucester, who led them, was slain; and while the English army gazed with dismay at the slaughter that was being made of their comrades, they saw what they thought to be a new army, with waving standards, coming to attack them. This was another stratagem of Bruce's, who had provided the waggoners and horseboys of the army with banners, so that at a distance they looked like fresh soldiers coming to the assistance of the Scotch. The English were completely deceived by this trick. Thinking a new army was upon them, they threw down their arms and fled. For eighty miles did the Scotch pursue them, killing all the common soldiers they overtook, and taking prisoners the knights and nobles from whom a ransom was to be expected. Edward fled as fast as the rest, and took refuge in the castle of Dunbar, from whence he hurried home to England. He had had enough of fighting to last him for a long time.

Scotland was now free. Bruce even invaded the northern parts of England; and the weak Edward, far from conquering another kingdom, was not even able to defend his own. Moreover, the defeat at Bannockburn had cost the English a fearful price. Thirty thousand men are said to have been slain on the English side. In addition, Edward lost the money he carried with him for the payment of his soldiers, and all his baggage.

Unable to govern the country or himself, the poor king looked round for a new favourite on whom he could lean in his weakness. The friend he now chose, a young English nobleman named Hugh Spencer, was a far more suitable companion than ever the frivolous Gaveston had been;



BRUCE AT BANNOCKBURN.

and his father, the elder Spencer, was a man respected for his wisdom and valour. But by foolishly lavishing immense favours upon the Spencers, Edward excited the jealousy of the barons, who turbulently appeared in arms, and demanded that the favourites, father and son, should be dismissed. The two Spencers were absent when the barons came to London to make this demand of the king. Edward answered that he would not condemn men who were not present to speak for themselves. In this case the barons were in the wrong. They were too angry to listen to reason; and soon after one of them insulted the queen by refusing to let her into his castle, and by killing some of her attendants. Hereupon war broke out between the barons and the king. The Earl of Lancaster was at the head of the barons, and a brave knight, Sir Andrew Harcla, commanded the king's army. On the 16th March, 1322, a battle was fought at Boroughbridge, in which the Earl of Lancaster was taken prisoner. Edward caused him to be put to death, in the same manner as the earl had put Gaveston to death years before. Other rebellious nobles were soon afterwards executed.

For a time it seemed as if the king had regained his power in England; but he was too weak to keep it long. A combination of the nobles against him was certain to be the result of his obstinacy in persisting to keep the Spencers about his person; but it is sad to tell that the blow which cost the unhappy king his throne and his life was struck by his own queen, Isabella of France.

In 1324 the King Charles of France summoned Edward to Paris, to do homage, according to the feudal law, for the province of Guienne, which he held in France as a vassal of the French king. The Spencers were very unwilling to let the king depart out of the country; and at last it was arranged that the Queen Isabella and her son the young Prince of Wales should go in Edward's place.

In Paris Isabella saw Roger Mortimer, a nobleman who had been banished by Edward. This Mortimer became a great favourite of the queen, who was wicked enough to form a plot with him, that they might dethrone the king her husband. The assistance of the Count of Hainault was procured, through the promise of the queen that her son Edward should marry Philippa the count's daughter; and with a band of armed

men, supplied chiefly by the count, she landed in England. Here she asserted that her object was to relieve her husband from the cares of government; and as she was known to be an open enemy of the hated Spencers, she found many followers. The elder Spencer was besieged in the castle of Bristol, and fell into the hands of his enemies. Though he was nearly ninety years old, and had never done any real wrong, he was barbarously hanged; and his son, who was shortly afterwards captured with the king while attempting to escape from England, was likewise put to death. Edward was sent to Kenilworth castle, where he was compelled to resign the crown. No very grave accusations were brought against him. Indeed, he was unfortunate rather than wicked, the chief thing that could be alleged against him being that he could not govern the country, and gave his power to others, while he indulged in foolish and frivolous amusements. He was first placed as a prisoner in the hands of the Earl of Lancaster; but as that nobleman seemed to pity the fallen king's misfortunes, the Queen Isabella and her friend Roger Mortimer were afraid that the earl might wish to replace him on the throne, and therefore removed him to Berkeley Castle, where soon afterwards they caused him to be cruelly murdered.

This unhappy king perished on the 21st of September, 1327, in the forty-third year of his age. He had reigned over England during twenty miserable, turbulent years.

## CHAPTER V.

### EDWARD III.

Chivalric time of Edward III.—The King's accession—Regency of Isabella and Mortimer—War with Scotland—Death of Mortimer—Renewed war with Scotland—Battle of Halidon Hill—War with France—Battle of Sluys—Battle of Crecy—Siege of Calais.

WE have now to begin a reign full of stirring events—full of danger and valour, of war and bloodshed. The time of Edward III. forms the very best part of the knightly period, when men fought for fame and

honour even more than for profit, and when the courtesy of the gentleman softened the rude valour of the soldier. In this reign was founded the Order of the Garter, which is considered the highest and noblest of all knightly companies; and the time is ever memorable for the commencement of the long and terrible war with France which was continued through the reigns of several kings for the period of a hundred years.

When Edward came to the throne, on the abdication of his unhappy father, he was only fourteen years old. His mother, the wicked Queen Isabella, and her favourite Roger Mortimer, ruled the country; and very soon they made themselves hated by all the people, for their greediness of money and their oppression and tyranny.

In those days there was almost always fighting going on between the English and Scotch, on the borders, where the two countries joined; and now the famous King Robert Bruce, who had grown old, assembled an army and marched into England. Edward was only fourteen years old; but he would not allow a stranger to invade his country. He collected an army, and marched northward. The Scots retreated before him, and would not fight a battle, so Edward was obliged to return to York and dismiss his army; and then Roger Mortimer and the queen granted Bruce a peace in return for a sum of money.

Mortimer became insolent and overbearing as his power and wealth increased, and at last his tyranny could be borne no longer. In a few years, when the young king had married Philippa of Hainault and was old and wise enough to rule for himself, he took Mortimer prisoner, and caused him to be executed; nor were there many in England to pity that nobleman's fate, for he was hated everywhere. The queen was allowed a pension, and remained in her house of Castle Rising, but she was never again permitted to interfere in matters of state.

In 1331 died the great and wise Robert Bruce, King of Scotland; and soon after war broke out once more between that country and England. Edward gained a great victory over the Scotch at Halidon Hill, 19th July, 1333. Nearly 30,000 Scotchmen fell on that fatal day, and their chief, the great Douglas, was slain. For a time it seemed as if the third Edward would succeed in the task of conquering Scotland, in which his weak father and his warlike grandfather had alike failed; but though





THE BATTLE OF CECY.

he subdued the southern counties, the Scots were determined to resist him to the last, and retreated into their mountains, whither he could not follow them.

A very important war now broke out with France: from the long time it lasted, it is often known in history as the "great," or "hundred years' war." Many thousands of lives did it cost, and much treasure was spent, and many fields were laid waste and villages and towns burnt, before it came to an end, and at the last neither side gained much by the long and cruel strife.

The quarrel began by Edward's setting up a claim to the throne of France. He declared that he had a right to rule, because he was the nephew of the French king, Philip IV., and all Philip's sons were dead. But another Philip, named Philip de Valois, a cousin of the old King Philip, now sat upon the French throne; and there is no doubt that Edward had not much right to claim the crown of France. In those days, however, when men were ever ready for war, a very small cause was enough to set them fighting; and thus Edward began to make great preparations for going to France with a large army.

The first great battle was fought at sea, off the town of Sluys, in Flanders, between the fleets of Edward and of Philip, in 1340. The French king had the greater number of soldiers and sailors, but the English gained the victory; and so great was the defeat that for many days no one in the French court dared tell King Philip how great a loss he had suffered. To carry on this war, Edward wanted a great deal of money; and the Parliament gave him supplies, but made him grant them some privileges in return, so that the people became more free and independent than they had been.

During the next few years little was done in the war; but, in 1346, Edward invaded France with an army, and the famous battle of Crecy was fought on the 25th of August in that year.

The English army amounted only to about 8,000 men; the French force was seven or eight times as large. But just as Bruce at Bannockburn probably gained his victory by the skilful disposition of his men, so did Edward now seek to make up by skill for the smallness of his numbers. He posted his men so that they could not be surrounded,



QUEEN PHILIPPA AND THE BURGESSES OF CALAIS.

and divided them into three bodies, one of which he entrusted to his young son Edward, called the Black Prince, who behaved very valiantly in this battle. He rode through the ranks to encourage his men; and before the battle began, each of them was ready and willing to do his best for the glory of the king and for the honour of England. The French army, on the other hand, was too numerous to be easily managed. One division crowded upon another; the words of command were not heard or heeded; and the great force was in confusion from the very first.

At three o'clock in the afternoon the battle began. The English archers shot their long arrows with terrible effect among the French, and the Welsh and Irish slew many with their long knives. The Prince of Wales was at one time in danger; but the king forbore to send him assistance, declaring that the honour of saving the day should belong to "the boy." Soon the French began to fly from the field: the English pursued them, putting them to death without mercy; and when evening fell, a vast number of nobles and knights, and 30,000 fighting men, lay dead upon the trampled and blood-stained grass. The English lost but few men, and the victory of Crecy is considered one of the greatest they ever gained.

Edward followed up this great success by laying siege to the seaport of Calais, opposite Dover. The French citizens and soldiers defended themselves valiantly for many months; but as Edward's army lay encamped all round their city, they could get no food, and were at last obliged to eat dogs, cats, and rats, and devour anything that would satisfy their hunger. At last they could not hold out any longer, and offered to surrender the city. Edward was angry at the trouble they had given him, and declared he would put every one in the town to death, unless six of the principal citizens came into his camp, barefoot, with ropes round their necks, and consented to die for the rest. This news caused much grief in Calais; but a brave burgess called Eustache de St. Pierre, and five other citizens, generously said they would fulfil the condition. When they came into Edward's camp, the king would have had them hanged at once. But the good Queen Philippa fell on her knees before him, and begged so earnestly for the lives of the brave

men, that Edward consented for her sake to spare them. Philippa then caused them to receive a good meal, and sent them away with presents; and she thus gained as much love and respect through her kindness and mercy as Edward had won fame by his great deeds in this French war.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE REIGN OF EDWARD III. CONCLUDED.

Philippa's victory at Nevill's Cross—The "Black Death"—The war with France renewed—Battle of Poitiers—John of France taken prisoner—His death in England—Treaty of Bretigny—Death of the Black Prince, and of Edward—Renown of England during his reign.

WHILE King Edward was gaining renown in France, Queen Philippa had upheld the honour of England at home. When she came into Edward's camp before Calais, in time to save the poor citizens' lives, she brought with her the news of a great victory gained over the Scots at Nevill's Cross, near Durham. In this battle the King (David Bruce) of Scotland had been taken prisoner, and was now safely lodged in the Tower of London. Thus the year 1346 was a glorious and successful one for Edward. He now concluded a truce with France, and returned to England, where he was most joyfully received by his people.

A heavy calamity now came upon England. There came stalking across Europe, from the wilds of Asia, a pestilence so terrible that it was known by the name of "the Black Death." The art of healing the sick was but little understood in those days. The coarse food on which the mass of the people lived laid them open to the attacks of plagues like this, and the towns were generally dirty and unhealthy. Thus it happened that in London alone the "Black Death" destroyed 50,000 persons; and it is said that in all the countries through which the disease took its baneful way, one person in every three died beneath it.

In 1355 the war between England and France was resumed. King Edward invaded France from Calais, and sent the Black Prince to effect a landing farther south. After a short time, Edward was recalled to

Engand by some disturbances in Scotland. He left the Prince of Wales to carry on the war with France, taking care to send over some troops to strengthen his son's army.

In the next year, 1356, ten years after the battle of Crecy, the Black Prince fought the battle of Poitiers against the French. The King Philip of Valois had died some years before; and his son John, who now occupied the throne of France, collected a large army and came suddenly on the brave young prince, thinking to crush him by superior numbers. His large army enabled him to surround the small force of the Black Prince; and young Edward, who, though brave as a lion, was yet prudent and far-seeing, understood his own danger, and would have been glad to come to terms with John and to leave France. But the French monarch thought himself so certain of victory, that he would only offer the very hardest conditions; and rather than yield himself a prisoner, the Prince of Wales bravely determined to fight it out.

The battle of Poitiers greatly resembled that of Crecy in many of its events. Again a great army came, as it had come ten years before, to attack a small force with too great confidence of victory. Again did the English archers pour into the ranks of the enemy those terrible arrows, that flew like hail, and pierced alike through tough steel corslet and lissom hauberk of ringed iron. Once more did the Prince of Wales charge, as he had done at Crecy, upon foes already astonished and dismayed by the hail of arrows; and once more did the great army, seized with a general panic, turn to fly. King John of France was left almost alone upon the field, fighting like a brave knight. He was received by the Black Prince as a brave enemy should be received in misfortune—with all respect and honour. Edward caused a repast to be prepared for the captive king in his own tent, and stood respectfully while the royal guest supped, refusing to sit down, lest he might seem to show a want of respect. The French captives could not refrain from admiration at the chivalric conduct of their brave young foe.

A truce was now concluded with France, and the Prince of Wales brought John over to England; but the French king was treated rather as an honoured guest than as a prisoner. And the prince, when he entered London, rode on a palfrey, while John was mounted on a splendid



THE FRENCH KING BROUGHT AS A PRISONER TO LONDON.

horse and dressed in royal robes. John lived in London, in the Savoy Palace in the Strand, and at last died there; for during his absence the government of France fell into confusion: there were ceaseless quarrels among the chief men, and the sum required for the ransom of the captive king could not be raised.

Once more did King Edward invade France; but the misery of the country and, it is said, a terrible tempest that one day arose and killed a thousand of his men, touched his conscience; and he concluded a treaty with the French at Bretigny.

The Black Prince again quitted England, and engaged in a foreign war, in which he performed great deeds, but gained little besides honour. His health gave way, and he was compelled to return to England with his wife, a beautiful lady, called "Joan, the Fair Maid of Kent," and with his young son Richard. His health failed more and more, and in 1376, to the great grief of the English people, he died.

The last days of Edward III. were embittered by the death of this noble son. The good Queen Philippa was also dead. She had been a faithful wife to Edward, and a kind and generous queen to the English, who loved her while she lived, and held her memory in deep respect after she was dead. These losses crushed the spirit of the old king; and a year after the death of the Black Prince he sank into the grave, after a reign of fifty years. His conquests in France and Scotland were all lost, except the towns of Berwick and Calais. Still his reign had been of great advantage to the English. Crecy and Poitiers had gained them a great name abroad, and at home the English obtained better laws and more justice than they had ever yet enjoyed.



## CHAPTER VII.

### RICHARD II.

Minority of Richard II.—Successes of the Scotch—Discontent among the peasants—Wat Tyler's Rebellion—Courageous conduct of the King—Death of Wat Tyler, and dispersion of the rebels—Weakness of the King—He loses the affection of the people.

By the law of England the crown always descends from father to son. The young Prince Richard, the son of the Black Prince, therefore became heir to the English throne when his father died; and on the death of his grandfather, the old King Edward, he was proclaimed King of England. He was then only ten years of age. This was a great misfortune, for in those times the enemies of a country were always ready to take advantage of the youth and inexperience of its king; and accordingly we find that the French landed in the Isle of Wight, and the Scotch took the first opportunity of invading the northern counties.

The king was too young to take any active part in governing the country in the beginning of his reign; and the successes of the Scotch made the people very angry. No doubt they thought with regret of the days of the last king and of the heroic Black Prince, when no invader could come into England without meeting quick and severe punishment. One advantage, however, arose from the minority of the king—the House of Commons rose in power, and now for the first time chose a Speaker or chairman to preserve order during their sittings.

Though the cities had gained some amount of freedom, the English peasants and the dwellers in the villages and small towns, the husbandmen, labourers, and artizans of various sorts, were still in a state of slavery. In the last reign they had seen something of the state of things in Flanders and other countries, where the class to which they belonged had more power and greater privileges than they possessed; and so they began to think of rising against their masters. John Ball, a priest of

## WAT TYLER'S INSURRECTION—HIS DEATH.

Kent, went about the country telling the people they ought to be free, for that all men had been created equal ; and the people were very ready to listen to him.

In 1381 a tax of a shilling on every person above fifteen years of age was levied upon the people. In those days a shilling was more than many a poor Englishman possessed ; and as the tax-gatherers were very rough and rude in their way of collecting the tax, the people became very angry. One of the collectors insulted the daughter of Wat Tyler, a blacksmith, of Dartford in Kent, whereupon Wat Tyler raised his great hammer, and killed the tax-gatherer by a blow on the head. The neighbours, who came crowding up, declared that the tax-gatherer had been rightly served ; and they determined to march to London, and get their grievances redressed. Their numbers increased greatly as they approached the capital, until they amounted to some ten thousand men. Tyler and his forces soon entered London. There they behaved riotously, burning the palace of the Duke of Lancaster and various other buildings. At last they encamped in Smithfield, and here the young King Richard gave the only instance of courage we find recorded of him during all his reign.

He was only fifteen years of age ; but when he heard the rebels were posted in Smithfield, he rode boldly forth, surrounded only by the Mayor of London and a few attendants, to parley with them. He rode forward alone to speak to Wat Tyler, who presently left his own men, and came towards the king's retinue. It is said that the unfortunate smith laid his hand in a threatening way on the hilt of his dagger. Be this as it may, William Walworth, the Mayor of London, angry at what he termed the rebel's insolence, smote him on the head with his mace. Wat Tyler rolled to the ground, and some of the attendants at once killed him with their daggers. The insurgents, when they saw their leader fall, bent their bows to avenge his death ; but the young king rode forward to them with great presence of mind, told them that Tyler was a traitor, and that he himself would be their leader. He then placed himself at their head, and led them away into the fields towards Islington, the rebels following him in a bewildered way. In the meantime, the rumour had gone abroad that the king was in danger, and some thousands of his



RICHARD II, AND WAT TYLER.

friends came marching up. On seeing this body moving towards them, the insurgents fell on their knees, and begged the king to pardon their rebellious conduct. He promised to do so, and they retired to their homes.

The demands that these poor people made were not extravagant. They required to be set free from their state of slavery, to be allowed to buy and sell freely in the market towns, and to pay a fixed rent for the land they cultivated, instead of being compelled to work without pay for their feudal lords. Though the king promised pardon to all, he broke his word, and many were hanged; and the charters or letters of liberty that had been given to some of the rebels to appease them while the danger lasted, were taken from them as soon as it was over.

In the matter of Wat Tyler's rebellion the young king had shown so much courage and presence of mind, that great hopes were entertained that he would grow up to be a great and gallant hero, like his father and grandfather. But he did not improve as he grew older. He was fond of luxury and splendour, kept a great retinue of people about him, and was idle and careless in affairs of state. Like Edward II., he made favourites among his courtiers, and chose them badly. One of these favourites, Robert de Vere, Earl of Oxford, he sent to Ireland as Lord Lieutenant, just as Edward II. had sent Gaveston; and the new lord of Ireland was as much hated as Edward II.'s favourite had been.

This conduct roused the anger of the barons, and two parties were formed, one consisting of the favourites of the king, and the other of the principal nobles, among whom were the Dukes of Lancaster and Gloucester, Richard's uncles, who held him in contempt, and tried to carry out their own ambitious designs without consulting his interests. Lancaster had a claim to the throne of Castile in Spain, for he had married the daughter of Pedro the Cruel, former king of that country; and the English were called upon to pay heavy taxes to furnish men and ships, that Lancaster might win the Spanish crown. He failed, however, and after wasting much time and treasure, was obliged to give up his attempt.

Richard now took the government of the kingdom into his own hands, and matters went worse than before. He made enemies of the

Londoners by demanding a large sum of money of them, and taking away their charter on its refusal; he raised illegal taxes, and thus lost the affection of the people generally; and he took cruel revenge upon those nobles of the opposite party who fell into his power, and thus drew down upon himself the hatred of all the barons. The one useful point in his government was the signing of a peace with France, which was kept unbroken till his death.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE REIGN OF RICHARD II. CONCLUDED.

Quarrel between Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, and Henry Bolingbroke—Banishment of Bolingbroke and Norfolk—Death of John of Gaunt—Injustice of Richard—Return of Bolingbroke—Richard's deposition and death—Short account of changes in this reign.

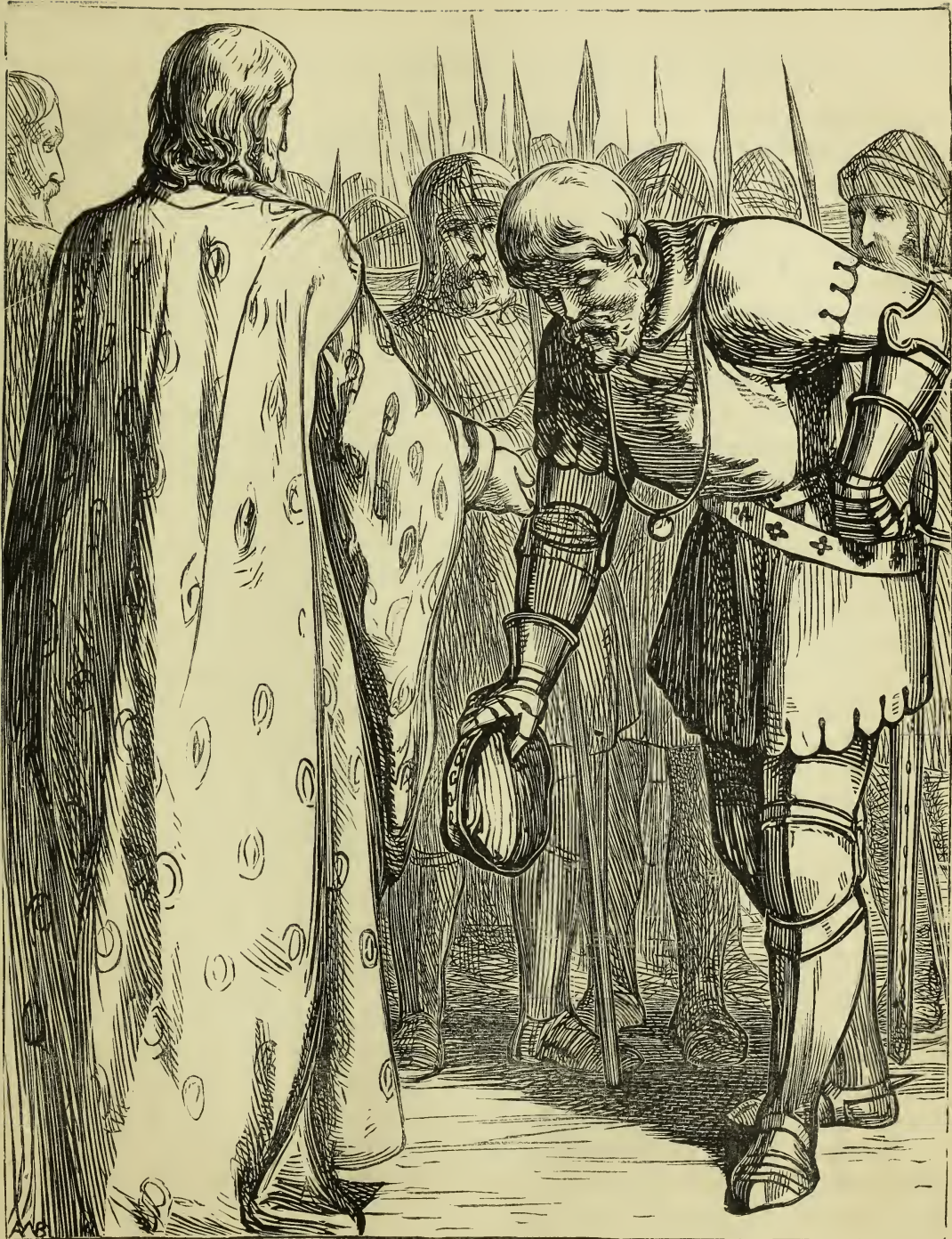
IN the year 1398 a quarrel arose between two great English nobles. Henry of Hereford, surnamed Bolingbroke, the son of the old Duke of Lancaster and cousin to the king, accused the Duke of Norfolk of having committed treason, by saying false and slanderous things of the king. Norfolk denied the charge, and asserted that Hereford's words were false. Both then asked leave to fight out the quarrel in single combat. In those times such contests were not unusual. The king gave his permission, and preparations were made for thus settling the question in presence of the whole court.

On the appointed day, Hereford and Norfolk appeared in complete armour before the king and court, who came together to be present at the combat. But when the signal had been given for commencing and the knights were preparing to encounter, the king suddenly stopped the proceedings, and ordered them both to appear before his throne. Then he told them that he would banish them from England, Norfolk for life and Hereford for ten years; but Hereford took his leave of the king in such respectful terms, and appeared so submissive, that Richard at once

altered his sentence to only six years' banishment, and promised that if Hereford became heir to any estates before he could return to England, they should be kept for him until the sentence of banishment was fulfilled.

So Henry Bolingbroke went to France, to pass away the six years as best he might; and if Richard had only kept his word, the matter might have ended there. But old John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, the father of Henry Bolingbroke, died soon after; and Richard, in defiance of the promise he had given to his cousin, seized upon the dukedom of Lancaster which Henry Bolingbroke should have inherited. After this act of injustice he embarked for Ireland, on a warlike expedition; and in the meantime the news of his unjust act travelled to France, and Henry Bolingbroke heard how the faithless Richard had deceived him. Then he determined upon revenge. With a few followers he embarked for England, and landed in Yorkshire, at a place called Ravenspurgh, which has long since been washed away by the sea. He declared that he had come to obtain his rights in the matter of the Duchy of Lancaster, which was withheld from him; and so many flocked to join him, that in a short time he was at the head of an army of 60,000 men. Richard, on the contrary, found his army melting away like snow, though on his return from Ireland he brought with him 20,000 men. The Earl of Northumberland, who was on Henry Bolingbroke's side, persuaded him to trust himself in his cousin's hands; and Bolingbroke brought Richard to London, the last place in the kingdom where the king could expect to find friends, for the citizens hated him for his exactions. A Parliament met at Westminster, and at Bolingbroke's suggestion the king was desposed. Richard had no children, and accordingly Bolingbroke declared that the throne was vacant, and claimed it for himself as a grandson of Edward III., and still more as descended directly from an older king, Henry III.

No one was found to dispute the claim, and thus the banished Hereford became King of England, under the title of Henry IV. The next question was, what should be done with the deposed Richard. It was decided that he should be sent away to some prison, where none of his friends could come, so that no attempt should be made to put him on



BOLINGBROKE'S MEETING WITH RICHARD II.

## MURDER OF RICHARD—PROGRESS IN ENGLAND.

the throne again. So the unhappy king was carried off to Pontefract Castle; and no one knows exactly how he came by his death, which happened soon after. One account says that Sir Piers of Exton, his keeper, and some of his guards, attacked Richard and slew him; another story tells us that the king was broken-hearted, refused all food, and thus starved himself to death. One thing only is certain, that his death was not unexpected, for no one believed he would live long after he fell into the hands of his enemies. He was only thirty-three years old, and had reigned in England twenty-two years.

In Richard's time the English were making great progress in many ways. Their language, their dress, and their mode of living were all improving. Till the days of Edward III., though they had many sheep, which yielded them abundance of wool, they were obliged to send the wool across the seas to Flanders to be made into cloth; for, as an old writer tells us, they knew no more how to prepare it than the sheep that had first worn it. But, in Edward's days, a number of skilled weavers were brought to England from Flanders, who taught the English the art of manufacturing cloth; so the people were now better dressed than their forefathers had been. In the time of Edward III. and Richard II. there lived a poet named Geoffery Chaucer, who is called the father of English poetry, for his poems are the first we have in the real English language. They are so well written that they are read with pleasure even now. Clock-making was also practised in England at this time; and an invention of a very different kind was that of gunpowder. Cannon are said to have been first used by the English at the battle of Crecy. They were very clumsily made of rods of iron like the staves of a cask, fastened together with hoops; and great stones were shot from them, instead of the iron balls now in use. The dress of the nobles was far more costly in Richard's time than in the days of the warlike Edward III. The extravagant and wasteful king set the example of profusion, which was pretty generally followed by his courtiers; and of one of the lords it is told that he possessed fifty suits of cloth of gold.

The only battle of importance fought in Richard's time was that of Otterbourne against the Scots, in which the English gained the victory, and the Earl of Douglas was slain.



## PART V. THE LANCASTRIAN KINGS.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### HENRY IV.

Henry not the real heir to the throne—Rebellions—Owen Glendower—Scottish invasion of England—Battle of Holmedon Hill—Revolt of the Percys—Battle of Shrewsbury—Death of Hotspur—The Lollards—A plague—Follies of the Prince of Wales—Death of Henry.

THOUGH Henry Bolingbroke had made himself King of England, he was not the real heir to the throne. According to law the crown belonged to Mortimer, Earl of the March, or border country on the frontier of Wales; and in the very next year, 1400, a number of noblemen made a conspiracy to place Mortimer on the throne. Some other discontented barons got up a rebellion in another direction, and pretended that one Maudlin a priest, who closely resembled Richard in appearance, was the deposed king himself, who, they said, had escaped from his prison at Pontefract; but they were defeated by Henry's friends, and several of them were beheaded.

The new king was brave and active; but all his bravery and activity were scarcely sufficient to maintain him on the throne he had seized. Hardly was one insurrection put down, when another arose on the borders of Wales, headed by a Welsh hero named Owen Glendower, who had been attached to Richard, and who valiantly protected himself for years against the friends of Henry, who sought to deprive him of his estate. The Scotch also made incursions into England. Henry was obliged to march northward, and actually took Edinburgh. But notwithstanding this, the Scottish King Robert III. would not do him homage, nor would the Scottish nobles submit to him. Pressing busi-

ness required his presence in England, so he was obliged to march back to London, without having gained much by his Scottish invasion. The Crown of England was a thorny one to Henry Bolingbroke.

In 1402 the great Scottish Earl of Douglas invaded England. The Earl of Northumberland, and his brave son Henry Percy, generally called Harry Hotspur, marched against him, and at the battle of Holmedon Hill, in 1402, the Earl of Douglas was taken prisoner. King Henry, who distrusted the two Percies, was anxious that they should not release the Douglas for ransom, as was the usual custom of those days, and therefore sent word to them, desiring them to detain the Scottish nobleman in custody. They were greatly offended at this, especially young Harry Hotspur, who remembered how differently the king had behaved to them when he was only Henry Bolingbroke, coming home from exile, and how he had sought their help and favour, who now sent his commands with haughty insolence. Both father and son determined to be revenged; and accordingly they made an agreement with the Welsh chieftain, Owen Glendower, to drive Henry from the throne by force, and set up the Earl of March in his place. They brought an army together with all speed; but just when they were ready, the Earl of Northumberland fell sick, so that young Harry Hotspur was obliged to take the command of his father's forces.

The king's army came upon the rebels at Battlefield, near Shrewsbury. Hotspur behaved like a brave knight, and was killed, fighting valiantly in the thickest of the throng; Prince Henry, the king's eldest son, also earned much fame by his valour on this memorable day. The rebels were completely defeated, and their army was dispersed. The king, who had probably seen more than enough of bloodshed, showed himself disposed to act mercifully towards his beaten foes. The Earl of Northumberland's sickness probably saved that nobleman's life, for as he had not been present in the field, the death of his son was considered sufficient punishment for him, and he was pardoned.

The young Prince of Wales was only sixteen years old when he fought at Shrewsbury. Yet he refused to leave the field when he was wounded, declaring that a king's son ought to set a good example and show his men how to fight.



DEATH OF HOTSPUR.

The Earl of Northumberland could not long remain quiet. In 1405 he was again in rebellion against the king, and had allied himself with Scrope, Archbishop of York, and the Earl of Nottingham; and these nobles raised the standard of revolt. The Earl of Westmoreland was sent against them, and with seeming frankness made them an offer for peace. He proposed that both sides should disband their armies, and promised in the king's name that the demands of the discontented nobles should be considered, and what was wrong set right. Trusting to his word, the rebels dismissed their forces; but Westmoreland, who had kept his army together, set upon Scrope and the earl, took them prisoners, and had them instantly beheaded on Shipton Moor. Again the Earl of Northumberland escaped, by flying from England without loss of time. In 1408 he returned, again assembled an army, and tried his fortune once more against the king. Again he was defeated, at Barham Moor in Yorkshire; and this time there was no escape for him, for he was slain in the battle.

In the last reign certain persons had arisen who found fault with the state of religion, and wished to see the Church cleansed of some faults that many saw and deplored. They were led by a priest named Wycliffe. They are known by the name of Reformers, because they desired to amend or reform matters of religion; but in those days people called them the Wycliffites or Lollards; and as the priests were very angry at being interfered with, the Lollards were looked upon as criminals, and treated with great severity. Many of them were imprisoned, and some put to death, in this reign. The prison in which they were shut up in the palace of the Archbishop of Canterbury, at Lambeth, near London, is still shown, and has kept its name of the Lollard's Tower to this day.

A great plague or pestilence broke out in the year 1407, and many thousand people died. The country was in an unsettled state, and great crimes were committed. Among the most disorderly of Henry IV.'s subjects was his own son, the Prince of Wales, who made friends of some thoughtless, dissolute companions, and indulged in all kinds of riot and lawlessness. At one time he even took to robbing on the highway, plundering the men who had received money for his father; and one day, when a follower of his had been arrested for some crime and taken



before Sir William Gascoigne, the Chief Justice, young Harry so utterly forgot his duty as to strike the judge a blow in open court. Hereupon Gascoigne, who would not be treated with disrespect even by the king's son, ordered the Prince of Wales into custody. The prince, who was thoughtless rather than wicked, felt himself in the wrong, and submitted quietly to his sentence; and when the king heard of it, he said he esteemed himself happy in having an upright judge in his service who would do justice on such an offender; and still more in having a son willing to submit to such punishment.

In spite of all his madcap tricks and follies, this Prince Harry often showed signs of a great and noble soul. His father had once been incensed against him by evil counsellors, and thought so badly of the young prince that he even believed Harry wished to take his life. But the prince came to Westminster Hall, quite unattended, and tendered his duty to his father; and on their retiring to a private room, he fell on his knees, and begged his father would stab him to the heart rather than believe him capable of treachery and ingratitude. The poor king, weak and broken down by care and anxiety, and sorely burdened by the crown he had sinned so deeply to win, was touched by his brave son's simple faith. He embraced the prince tenderly, and the two became excellent friends.

As time progressed, the health of King Henry IV. gave way more and more. He became subject to fits, and sank into a state of deep despondency. Perhaps he thought of the poor foolish cousin who had been his king, and whose life had ended so darkly in the gloomy dungeon at Pomfret. Certain it is, that a secret grief destroyed his rest, and brought him to the grave at the early age of forty-six. In his last illness the prince entered the room where the king was lying helpless and unconscious in bed, with the crown by his pillow; and thinking Henry was dead, Prince Harry took away the crown. The king woke up presently, missed it, and asked what had become of it; and when the prince returned, and explained the matter, the dying Henry shook his head sadly, asking the young prince what right he had to the crown, when his father had none. Harry replied, "My liege, with the sword you won it, and with the sword I will keep it." "Do as you think best,"

said the king in a feeble voice. "I leave the issue to God, and may He have mercy on my soul."

Soon afterwards he died. His reign had been restless and unhappy. He had sinned deeply in revenging himself on Richard, who, though a weak bad man, was still the king to whom Bolingbroke had sworn obedience. He had gained a crown, but with it had come remorse, and wakeful nights, and unquiet days, and mistrust and misery. He had attempted to right himself by doing wrong, and had been punished by Him who has told us in His Word that "Mischief shall hunt the violent man."

## CHAPTER II.

### HENRY V.

Mistaken opinions concerning Henry's character—Quarrel with France—Re-interment of the corpse of Richard II.—Cruelties towards the Lollards—Invasion of France—Siege of Harfleur—Distress in the King's army—Dangerous position of Henry.

WHEN Henry V. came to the throne, many who had known him only as the madcap Prince of Wales, consorting with idle companions and brawling in the streets, expected that he would prove but a weak king, led by favourites and incapable of great actions. Among those who thought thus lightly of him was Louis the Dauphin, the eldest son of the French King Charles VI., who, on learning that Henry intended invading France, sent him in derision a number of tennis-balls, saying that these were the best tribute to pay to a king who had always shown himself fond of playthings. But Henry replied that he would play such a game at tennis in France as should astonish the Dauphin and the French king too; and he kept his word right royally.

On the death of his father, in 1513, he at once dismissed the idle companions with whom he had wasted his youth, and resolved to devote himself henceforth to the fulfilment of his duties as King of England. The English in those days were always restive and turbulent under a

weak king, and nothing was so sure to please them and gain their cheerful obedience as evidence of strength and warlike skill in their sovereigns. This was probably one reason why Henry, immediately on ascending the throne, resolved to revive the old claim which his ancestor, Edward III., had set up to the French throne; and he prepared to lead an army into France, and undertake the conquest of that country.

The memory of the violent means by which his father had gained the crown of England, and, perhaps, also a feeling of pity for the fate of the unhappy Richard II., caused Henry to have the murdered king's corpse removed from King's Langley, where it had been buried, and conveyed to Westminster, where it was solemnly interred among the kings; so that poor King Richard, though he had not been allowed to retain the station of a monarch while he was alive, came at last to rest among his kindred now that he was dead.

The Lollards or Wycliffites, who had been much persecuted during the last reign, had become more numerous than ever. The priests were very angry with them, and persuaded King Henry to treat them with great cruelty; and Sir John Oldcastle, one of their leaders, was burnt to death in Smithfield.

In 1415 Henry sailed from Southampton to invade France. That kingdom was then in a very bad state. The king, Charles VI., called "the Simple," was subject to fits of madness, which made him quite unable to govern; and some of the great nobles took advantage of this to fill the country with their brawls and quarrels. Henry landed with his army, and besieged Harfleur, which he took. But soon afterwards misfortune began to lower upon his enterprise. The fleet, on whose arrival the forces depended for provisions and reinforcements, was scattered by a storm. The season was unhealthy; and the army, being reduced to great straits for want of food, began to despond. Sickness broke out in the camp, and many of the soldiers died. The rest were enfeebled by anxiety and toil, and the season was far advanced; for Harfleur had not been taken till the 18th of September, 1415. Henry, therefore, determined to march to Calais, and thence return to England for the winter. Well would it have been for the French had they permitted him to retire unmolested. But this seemed a favourable moment to crush the invaders





HENRY V. AT AGINCOURT.

## MISERABLE CONDITION OF THE ENGLISH ARMY AT AGINCOURT.

by one great blow ; for sickness and privation had thinned Henry's ranks till there were not 10,000 men left in his army. The Dauphin Louis, who had sent him the tennis-balls, had by this time assembled an army of 100,000 men. He made sure that the English were in his power and could not escape, and already, no doubt, calculated on the ransom he should obtain for the King of England, whom he looked upon as his prisoner.

But Henry was not the man to yield himself a prisoner or to lose his army without a fight. He sent a message to the Dauphin, declaring that if he was molested in his march he would try the issue of battle. This was just what the French wished. And thus, not many miles from Crecy, where Edward III. had gained his great victory nearly seventy years before, an English army once more lay in nearly the same position in which Edward's army had been at the time of that famous fight— weakened in numbers, toilworn and weary with marching, surrounded by an enemy many times more numerous than itself, and cut off from all hope of succour ; but led on by a king in whose valour and skill every man could trust, and determined to fight to the last for King Harry and for the honour of England.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE REIGN OF HENRY V. CONCLUDED.

Battle of Agincourt—Henry's triumphant return to England—State of affairs in France—Treaty of Troyes, in 1520—Henry appointed Regent on his marriage with Catherine of France—Birth of a Prince—Death of the King—State of London in this reign.

ON the 25th of October, 1415, was fought the famous battle of Agincourt, or Azincour. On the night before the combat, the king went the round of the tents, showing his men a cheerful countenance, encouraging them by hearty words, and exhorting them to fight bravely. He declared that though his army was small, he did not wish for one

## THE BATTLE—GREAT VICTORY—HENRY'S RETURN TO ENGLAND.

man more; for "there were men enough," he said, "to die for their country; and if they were to gain the victory, the smaller the number of men, the greater would be the share of honour that each would gain."

The story of the great battle of Agincourt is like that of Crecy and Poitiers told over again. Once more a few determined men, led on by a gallant king, stood boldly up to face an immense army under various leaders, strong in numbers, but wanting in unity. The French were crowded together in such a way that their numbers were rather a hindrance than a help to them. The English archers, whose arrows flew like snow and struck like hailstones, rained confusion among them. The king fought like a hero in the thickest of the fray, conspicuous to all by the crown on his helmet; and no man could fail to do his best under such a chieftain. The French, on their part, fought with great gallantry. The Duke of Alençon, one of their leaders, engaged in a hand-to-hand combat with Henry, and struck the English king a blow on the head, which would have killed him but for the crown he wore, part of which was cut off by the stroke. Alençon was himself slain soon afterwards. The English yeomen did gallant service. After a tremendous struggle, the French began to give way, and at length they were drawn from the field. The French herald, Montjoy, was brought before Henry, and acknowledged that the victory was with the English. "How call you that castle," asked the king, "that stands on yonder height?" On being informed that it was named Agincourt, he said, "Then call we this the field of Agincourt, fought on St. Crispin's Day."

In this great battle the French lost many thousands of men. Two royal princes and a great number of knights, nobles, and gentlemen were taken prisoners; and when the sun set on that 25th of October, a glorious page had been added to the history of England.

After this great victory, Henry marched on to Calais, and thence embarked for England, where the news of his victory ensured him and his men a right royal welcome. The English were proud of their gallant young king, and no one now thought of asking what right he or his father had to the crown. He had fulfilled his words spoken to the dying Henry IV., that "he would keep the crown by the sword."

Meanwhile, things in France became worse and worse. The king was

quite imbecile, and the country fell into utter confusion and ruin. Thus, when in 1418 Henry again led an army into France, no real resistance could be made by the French. There was no thought now of sending him tennis-balls. On the contrary, the French were obliged to accept any terms he chose to offer.

The King of France, Charles VI., was quite helpless and foolish. The most powerful nobleman in his court was the Duke of Burgundy, whose father had been murdered a few months before Henry's second invasion of France. Upon condition that the murderer of his father should be brought to justice, the Duke of Burgundy agreed to forward Henry's views to the French crown, to the exclusion of the Dauphin, the French king's son, who was the rightful heir. A treaty was concluded, called the Treaty of Troyes, in 1420, in which it was arranged that Charles, the present king of France, should keep his dignity as long as he lived; but that Henry should be made Regent, and become King of France at Charles's death, so that the two kingdoms might be converted into one; and that Charles of France, Henry of England, and the Duke of Burgundy should unite their forces to carry out this arrangement.

Henry thereupon married the Princess Catherine of France, daughter of King Charles VI. The Dauphin of France, who saw that his rights were entirely disregarded in the Treaty of Troyes, gathered an army together, and tried to conquer the kingdom for himself. But Henry was too strong for him, though the Dauphin, who was named Charles, like his father the poor imbecile French king, at first gained some advantages. He was obliged to retreat with his forces, and leave all the northern portion of France entirely in the hands of the English king.

Towards the end of the year 1421 Queen Catherine brought her warlike husband a son. Henry's prosperity and good fortune now seemed complete, and the birth of the little Prince Henry was celebrated with great pomp and rejoicing, alike in London and in Paris. But at the very height of his fortune, Henry V.'s career of prosperity was cut short. He fell suddenly and dangerously ill, at Vincennes, near Rouen, and his physicians were obliged to tell him that he would surely die.

Then he set about arranging his affairs as speedily as possible. He

## DEATH OF HENRY V.—HIS CHARACTER.

named his brother, the Duke of Bedford, Regent of France, in his infant son's name; the Duke of Gloucester was to be Regent of England; and to the Earl of Warwick was entrusted the safe keeping of the little prince who was soon to be a baby king.

After making these arrangements, the valiant King Henry died. He was thirty-three years old, and had reigned nine years over England. His subjects mourned for him with a sincere grief; for, in spite of the faults of his youth, he had been a great and a gallant king, with just those shining qualities which the English admired most, namely, courage, perseverance, and a hearty desire to work. Among the greatest of his virtues must be mentioned his scrupulous regard for truth. Friends and enemies could alike depend upon his word, which, once given, was never broken; a rare virtue in those days, when many promises were made, but few kept. The Earl of March, who had a better right to the throne than Henry could boast, and whom a weak king would therefore have hated or feared, lived in complete friendship with Henry; for he felt himself safe in the assurance that the noble Harry was incapable of treachery. Thus it is that this king was loved and trusted during his lifetime, and regretted after his death.

The young Queen Catherine, who was thus left a widow by her brave husband's early decease, afterwards married a handsome Welsh gentleman named Owen Tudor; and the descendant of Catherine and Owen became Kings of England after many stormy years, as you will read further on in this history.

Up to the time of Henry, no one thought of walking in the streets of London after dusk; for thieves and robbers lurked about, plundering all who fell into their hands. But in this reign it was enacted that the citizens should hang up lighted lanterns at their doors, so that the streets might not be quite dark; and every evening the watchmen went their rounds, to see that this command was obeyed; and to remind those citizens who would have spared their candles of their duty, the cry was raised, "Lantern, and a whole candle light! Hang out your lights!—hear!"

The Parliament often gave Henry large sums of money to pay for his wars in France; but these contests were so expensive that the king was

## HENRY VI. PROCLAIMED KING OF FRANCE—JOAN OF ARC.

obliged to pawn his crown jewels to obtain funds to pay his archers, each of whom received sixpence a day; a large sum for foot soldiers in those times.

### CHAPTER IV.

#### HENRY VI.

The Beauforts—State of affairs in France—Battle of Verneuil—Joan Darc, the Maid of Orleans—Her exploits and misfortunes—Reverses of the English—Gradual loss of France—Quarrels among the English nobles—Henry marries Margaret of Anjou—Jack Cade's rebellion—His defeat and death.

A FEW months after the death of the valiant Henry V., the poor imbecile King Charles VI. of France died too. Then the baby King Henry VI. was proclaimed monarch of France as well as of England. The arrangements that Henry V. had made for the government of the kingdom, until his son should be of an age to rule for himself, were in some respects altered. The great family of the Beauforts wished to take part in the government of England; and thus began a series of quarrels which had very bad consequences for the peace and prosperity of the country.

You will remember that when the Treaty of Troyes was concluded, the rights of the Dauphin, the heir to the French crown, were quite overlooked. Now that King Charles VI. was dead, the Dauphin again took up arms, to try and wrest France from the English, but for many years he had very little success. The great battle of Verneuil was fought on the 27th of August, 1424, and the English gained another great and brilliant victory. But from the year 1428 things began to turn against them, for then the brave Earl of Salisbury was slain, in besieging the city of Orleans; and at the same time there arose a powerful champion for the French cause.

This champion was a young girl, named Joan Darc, the daughter of a peasant. She suddenly conceived the idea that she was destined by

## SÜCCESSES OF JOAN—SHE IS BURNT—ENGLISH LOSSES IN FRANCE.

Heaven to drive the English out of France, and to have the French Dauphin Charles crowned king at Rheims.

Some of the French commanders listened to her tale, and brought her to the Dauphin, who was much impressed by her confidence and evident belief in her own power. The common soldiers received her with delight, and regarded her as one sent from heaven to help them. They drove the English from Orleans; and from this time the tide of battle turned in their favour.

The French soldiers acquired new courage when they heard with what certainty Joan predicted that the victory would be theirs. They fought with double vigour, and in a short time the siege of Orleans was really raised, and the Dauphin was crowned at Rheims, the Maid of Orleans, as she was now called, saluting him by the title of Charles VII., monarch of France. The heroic Joan, having now fulfilled her promises, wished to retire to her native village of Domremy. Charles, however, persuaded her to remain in his service and lead his army. But her confidence in herself was gone. In 1431 she was taken prisoner by the Burgundians at the siege of the town of Compeigne. The Burgundians delivered her up to the English, and soon afterwards the brave Maid of Orleans was publicly burnt as a witch at Rouen.

The English still possessed a great part of France; but from this time their territory decreased year by year. The brave Duke of Bedford, the brother of the heroic Henry V., died at Rouen, and the English soldiers in France gradually lost heart, and were driven from one place after another, until at last the whole of France was lost, with the sole exception of the town of Calais, which remained in the hands of the English for two hundred years longer.

As King Henry VI. grew to man's estate, he began to show himself very unlike his heroic father in character. He was weak and yielding, and of such a feeble mind that frequently he could not attend to affairs of state at all. Meanwhile the nobles began quarrelling with each other, as it was their wont to do when no strength of the king's held them in check; and the great Beaufort family began to increase its own power at the expense of those nearest to the king, especially of his uncles the Duke of Gloucester and the Duke of York. The latter was

deprived of the regency of France, and the former, whom they dared not openly put to death for fear of the people, who loved him, was accused of treason, and before the day of trial came, was found murdered in his bed.

King Henry had married Margaret, daughter of the Duke of Anjou, in France. This queen was as bold and determined as her husband was weak and wavering. As for Henry, his imbecility threw the government of the country into the hands of men who ruled for their own advantage, and not for the people's. The expenses of the king's household increased so greatly, that in a few years Henry VI. was hundreds of thousands of pounds in debt. To meet this expenditure, the people were unjustly taxed, or rather robbed; and soon there was discontent and murmuring from one end of the kingdom to the other. The Duke of Suffolk, a great friend of Queen Margaret, was the first person upon whom the anger of the people and the nobles fell. He was banished the kingdom, and murdered at sea on his way to France.

And now the English, who had cheerfully submitted to the rule of Henry V., and had never thought of inquiring whether a prince, who led them to victory and honour, had a good title or a bad one to the throne, began to ask that question very loudly concerning Henry VI., with whose weakness they were disgusted. They remembered that the family of the Duke of York were the descendants of an elder son of Edward III., while the Duke of Lancaster, old John of Gaunt, from whom Henry derived his claim, was only a younger son of the same monarch; and nobles and people began very seriously to consider whether the House of York might not furnish them with a far better king than was the sluggish Lancastrian who now dozed on the throne, while his barons quarrelled and maligned each other around him. Thus, from the foolishness of Henry, arose a quarrel, which grew hotter until it broke out into a great and disastrous war.

In 1450 a peasant named Jack Cade gathered a number of followers in Kent, and marched with them towards London, declaring that he would obtain redress for the grievances of the people. To make himself respected by the people, he pretended to belong to the family of Mortimer, whose claim to the throne was suspected by many; and when





JACK CADE AT LONDON STONE.

he came to London, he struck his sword upon the famous milestone called "London Stone," which then stood in the centre of the city, and cried out, "Now is Mortimer lord of London." Lord of London indeed he was for a short time; and his followers took vengeance upon Lord Say, the Treasurer, and Cromer, Sheriff of Kent, whom they hated, by putting them to death. But when the rebels began to plunder the merchants, and to set fire to the houses, Lord Scales, the Constable of the Tower, collected a force, marched out against them, and slaughtered many; whereupon the rest retreated to Rochester, and then dispersed. Cade himself was slain by the sheriff, Alexander Eden, after wandering about in the woods till he was half starved.

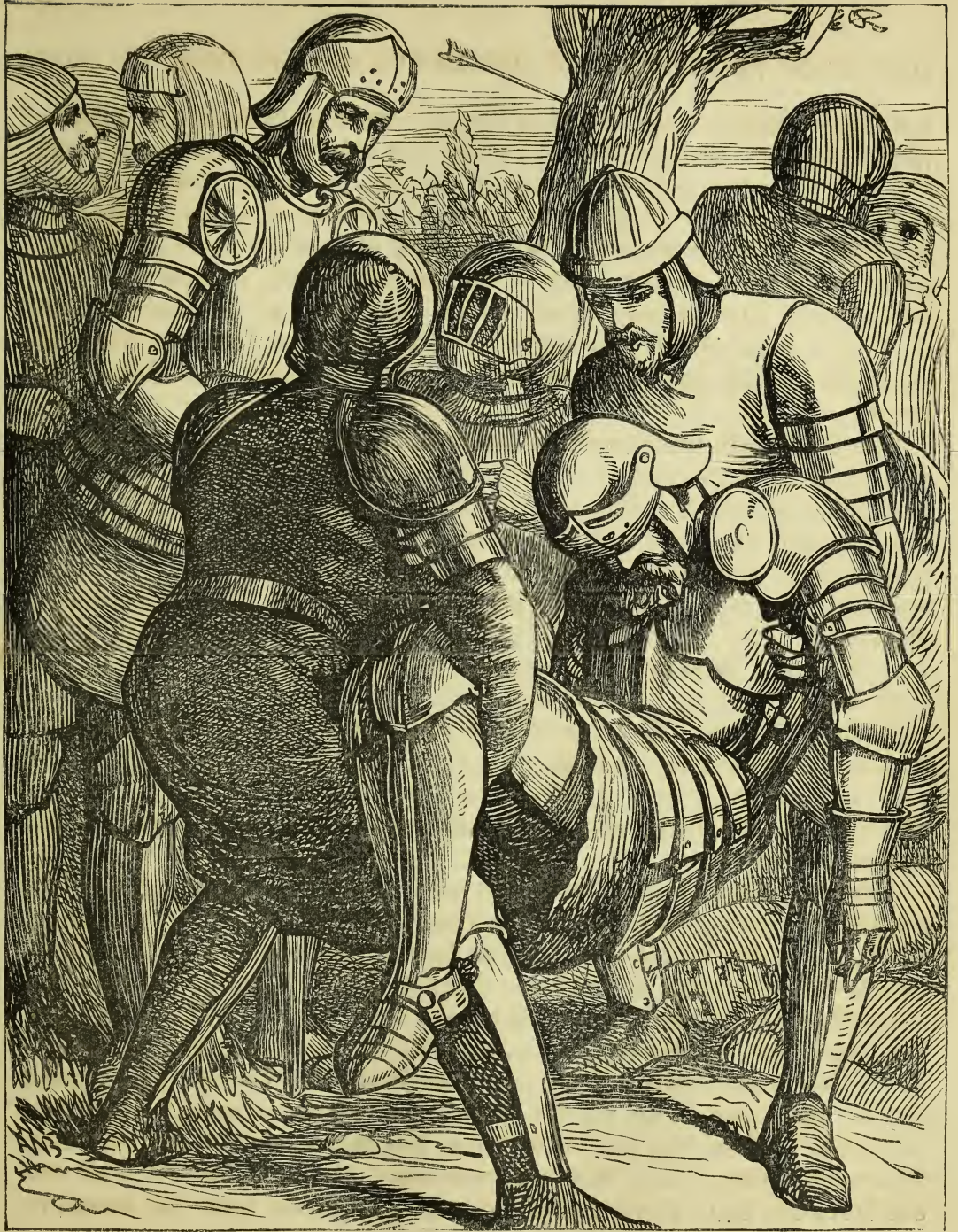
## CHAPTER V.

### THE REIGN OF HENRY VI. CONCLUDED.

The factions of York and Lancaster—Beginning of the War of the Roses—Battles of St. Alban's, Bloreheath, and Wakefield—Death of the Duke of York—Battle of Mortimer's Cross—Second Battle of St. Alban's—Edward of York proclaimed King of England.

AFTER the rebellion of Jack Cade had been suppressed, the discontent and quarrelling among the nobles became worse and worse; and at last they banded themselves into two parties—that of the Lancastrians, headed by King Henry, or rather by Queen Margaret, and that of the Yorkists, headed by the Duke of York. The quarrelling at last led to a war which lasted thirty years, and is known in history as the struggle of York and Lancaster, and sometimes as the War of the Roses.

This last name proceeded from the fact that, one day when a number of noblemen were walking in the Temple gardens in London, they began disputing as to the rights of the Duke of York and of King Henry to the throne. Those who held with King Henry gathered a red rose and put it in their caps, while those who considered the Duke of York's claim the better gathered a white rose, and wore it in token that they were of



THE DUKE OF YORK SLAIN AT WAKEFIELD.

the duke's party; and from that day the red rose became the token of the House of Lancaster, and the white rose that of the House of York.

For a time the king was attacked by mental illness, which rendered him more incapable than ever of ruling. During this period the Duke of York was made Protector of England, and ruled in King Henry's name; but when the king, on recovering his health, not only took the government into his own hands again, but made an especial favourite of York's great enemy, the Duke of Somerset, the Duke of York determined to dethrone Henry by force of arms, and the wars of the Roses began.

The first battle was fought at St. Alban's on the 22nd of May, 1455. The Duke of York gained the victory. Somerset was slain, and Henry was taken prisoner. But the Duke of York treated him with great respect; and the duke was again made Protector. For a short time it seemed as if the quarrel was at an end. The king resumed his power, and the Lancastrian and Yorkist lords walked side by side in solemn procession to the cathedral of St. Paul's, in London, as a sign that they were friends. But the truce did not last long. In 1459 the rival Houses were fighting again, and at Bloreheath, in Shropshire, the Lancastrians sustained a defeat. The Lancastrian party became very unpopular after this, and their cruelty towards many of their prisoners rendered them more odious than ever. Another truce was made, the weak Henry consenting that the Duke of York should reign after him, instead of his own son Edward.

From this time Queen Margaret, who was justly angry at seeing her son's rights thus passed over, became the real leader of the Lancastrians, while her feeble husband took little part in public affairs. The queen marched with a large army to the Duke of York's castle at Sandal, near Wakefield, in Yorkshire, and defied him, with many insults, to come out and fight her. Stung by her taunts, the duke at last took Margaret at her word, and drew out his army on Wakefield Green. Margaret's troops, commanded by Lord Clifford, gained the victory. York was slain, and Clifford had the barbarity to kill the old man's son, the little Duke of Rutland, after the fight was over. The old duke's head was cut from his dead body, a paper crown was placed upon the brows, in

## EDWARD DUKE OF YORK PROCLAIMED KING.

mockery of York's claim to the throne, and the horrible trophy was then brought to Margaret, who commanded her men to fix it up on the gate of York, together with the head of Lord Salisbury, York's friend, who had fallen into her hands, and was executed immediately after the battle. This cruelty is a great stain on Margaret's character, and lost her many friends, while it embittered her enemies against her.

Many other battles were fought between the partisans of York and Lancaster during this strife. The queen did a foolish thing by dividing her army, sending half of her men under Jasper Tudor against Edward, the eldest son of the late Duke of York, while with the rest she hastened towards London. Tudor was defeated by Edward at Mortimer's Cross, in Herefordshire, on the 2nd of February, 1461; while Margaret gained a victory over the Earl of Warwick in the second battle of St. Alban's, on the 17th of January; but the victory was of little use to her, for Edward was advancing against her, and she was not strong enough to meet him. Therefore she retreated in haste towards the north, while young Edward pushed on towards London. On his arrival there, he made a speech to the people, explaining his rights, and declaring that Henry VI. was an usurper. The people, charmed by his martial and handsome appearance, and contrasting his spirited bearing with the meek downcast aspect of the gentle Henry, who had not one kingly sign either in his appearance or character, were unanimous in favour of the young duke, who was accordingly proclaimed King of England on the 5th of March, 1461.

Here ends the unfortunate reign of Henry VI., though he lived for ten years longer, during the latter part of his life a prisoner in the Tower. As incapable of governing in troublous times as ever Richard II. or Edward II. had been, he shared the fate of those unhappy princes, and was buffeted to and fro, until at last the turbulent factions drove him from the throne. In peaceful times he might have preserved his crown, but never could have been a very active or useful king.

## CHAPTER VI.

### EDWARD IV.

Queen Margaret's struggle for the throne—Great battle at Towton, and defeat of the Lancastrians—Battles of Hedgley Moor and Hexham—The Queen's escape—Henry VI. shut up in the Tower of London—Tyranny of Edward IV.—Discontent of the Earl of Warwick—Battle of Barnet—Battle of Tewkesbury—Death of the Duke of Clarence, and of the King.

THOUGH Edward had been proclaimed King of England, the struggle between the Houses of York and Lancaster was by no means ended. It continued for many years more, and cost many thousands of lives. As the war proceeded, the combatants became more cruel; and at last it became quite customary that the noblemen taken prisoners in the various battles should be at once executed. Hundreds of men of high birth lost their lives in this way.

Though Queen Margaret's fortunes seemed now at a low ebb, that princess was far too spirited to give up the contest; indeed, throughout the whole war she fought with a perseverance and courage that would have gained her great honour had they been joined to a little womanly mercy and kindness towards the foes who fell into her hands. She was now in the north, surrounded by an army, and determined to fight to the last. The powerful Earl of Warwick, called the "King-maker," marched with his forces against her; and at Towton, in Yorkshire, on the 29th of March, 1461, the Lancastrians sustained the most cruel defeat that had yet been inflicted upon them. King Edward, who was as cruel as he was handsome, had given orders that no mercy should be shown to the enemy, and many thousands of the Lancastrians were slaughtered in the pursuit after the battle was over. When King Henry and Queen Margaret, who were at York, heard of the destruction of their army, they fled into Scotland, where King James received his unfortunate brother king hospitably; and Henry, who seemed always to be drawn into the contest against his will, appeared glad enough of this interval of quiet. Margaret afterwards passed over to Flanders, whence she obtained assistance from the Duke of Burgundy, whose duchess was



QUEEN MAGARET AND THE ROBBER.

## QUEEN MARGARET AND THE OUTLAW.

descended from the House of Lancaster; and Louis XI. of France, a crafty and cunning king, was induced to send her a small body of men, by the promise that Calais should be given up to him if Henry were restored to the throne. Thus, in 1464, the war broke out again; but Margaret's usual ill fortune attended her. She suffered a slight defeat at Hedgley Moor, and her army was completely scattered at the battle of Hexham, on the 15th of May. Flying from the battle-field, with her little son Edward, Prince of Wales, a boy of eleven years old, the queen fell into the hands of robbers, who plundered her and threatened her with death. She escaped, however; and, wandering in the woods with her boy, met an outlaw—a savage-looking man—who dwelt like a wild beast in the depths of Hexham Forest. Margaret's courage did not forsake her. She advanced boldly towards the outlaw, and presenting the little prince to him, said, "I commit to your care the son of your king." The wild outlaw was touched at the sight of her distress. He took the prince in his arms, and carried him to the cave where he dwelt, followed by Margaret. Some of the queen's followers found her in that place of refuge; and the faithful outlaw guided his guests on the way to Carlisle, whence they escaped into Scotland. Thence she crossed the seas, and did not reappear in England for some years. Henry, meanwhile, fell into the hands of King Edward, and was closely shut up in the Tower of London.

For a time King Edward IV. was a favourite in England; but his cruelty and tyranny soon began to change the feelings of the people towards him. He was so haughty that he fined the Sheriff of London for kneeling too near him. He caused a tradesman of London to be hanged for saying in jest, "My son is heir to *the Crown*," meaning, not the crown of England, but the sign by which his house was known. He exacted heavy taxes from the people, and offended his own most powerful friend, the great Earl of Warwick. His marriage with Lady Elizabeth Grey, the widow of a brave knight, gave offence to many of the nobility, who thought the king should have allied himself with some foreign princess; and their anger, and that of Warwick in particular, was increased by the dignities and honours Edward heaped on the relations of his queen, one of whom he made a marquis.



Thus it happened that, in the year 1470, Warwick, who had been banished from England, returned as the champion of Queen Margaret and her son; and his power was so great, that Edward was obliged to fly from England for a short time. He returned in the following year, however; and on the 14th of April, 1471, was fought the great battle of Barnet, between the troops of Edward and those of Warwick. In this battle, the great King-maker was slain, fighting on foot in the thickest of the throng; and with him died the last powerful friend poor Margaret possessed. She had just landed in Dorsetshire when the news of this great disaster reached her. She resolved to strike another blow before she gave up the cause as lost; and thus, on the 4th of May, 1471, was fought the last battle of the War of the Roses, in the field of Tewkesbury, in Gloucestershire. Margaret lost the battle mainly through the treachery of Lord Wenlock, one of her partisans; and both she and her son, the Prince of Wales, were taken prisoners. King Edward had the young prince brought into his tent, spoke cruel words to him, and struck him on the mouth with his iron gauntlet; whereupon the attendants, and, it is said, the king's brothers (Gloucester and Clarence) also, dragged the boy into another apartment, and slew him with their daggers. Queen Margaret was sent to the Tower, where she remained for some years a prisoner. On the night after the battle of Tewkesbury, King Henry died in that gloomy fortress. He had been ailing for some time, but many said that he was murdered; and some even declared that the Duke of Gloucester was the man who committed the crime. The truth, however, was never known.

And now the war of York and Lancaster was at last ended. For thirty years it had kept the country in an uproar, setting men against each other, costing thousands upon thousands of lives, and spreading desolation everywhere. The nobles were the class who suffered most; for besides the numbers slain on the battle-field, a great many perished on the scaffold. As the strife went on, the leaders on both sides had become cruel; and the object of each seemed to be, to put to death every chief of the opposite party who fell into their hands. Even when the combat was over, the jealousies and distrust to which it had given rise did not cease. Years afterwards, in 1478, King Edward, who had never

forgiven his brother Clarence for having deserted him during the war, caused the duke to be imprisoned in the Tower, where he was privately put to death; and the court of England was a scene of cunning, distrust, and envy.

Edward died of a fever in 1483, aged forty-one years. He was a cruel and ungrateful king, and few of his subjects had reason to regret him. He left several young children, the eldest of whom became King of England, with the title of Edward V.

In the reign of Edward IV., William Caxton, a mercer, brought into England the then newly-discovered art of printing. Caxton established a printing-press in Westminster, and began to translate and print books for the English people. This invention of printing was a very important event, for now the people had a chance of getting books, which till that time had been far too expensive for them; and now knowledge began to spread, especially the all-important knowledge of the Bible.

## CHAPTER VII.

### EDWARD V.

Unhappy circumstances of Edward's accession—Ambition and cunning of the Duke of Gloucester—Edward and his brother shut up in the Tower—Gloucester proclaimed King by means of the Duke of Buckingham.

THIRTY years of strife and bloodshed had but just passed away. The great storm of war, that had shaken England as a tempest shakes the sturdy oak, had hardly subsided. The nobles and chiefs who survived the fearful carnage were still angry with, and jealous of, each other; and now, of all times, the sceptre of England was to be held by the hands of a child. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that the reign of the fifth Edward should have been brief and disastrous. What chance had a poor boy, in those troublous times, of overcoming the perils which the strongest men were scarcely able to encounter?



GLOUCESTER CONDUCTING EDWARD V. INTO LONDON.

Of the sons of the old Duke of York, the father of Edward IV., only one now survived—the boldest and craftiest of them all, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, called “Crook-back” on account of his deformed shape. This Richard was named Regent of England, and guardian of the little Edward V. and of Richard, Duke of York, Edward’s younger brother. But his ambition was not satisfied with being Regent; he determined that he would be king.

Gloucester’s first act was to get rid of the friends of the young king, who might oppose his design. Accordingly, at a council, he accused the Lord Hastings, a powerful nobleman, of conspiring against him, and caused Hastings to be beheaded there and then on a charge of sorcery; but the real reason was, that Hastings, though he disliked the queen and her relations, was a faithful friend of the young king. The Earl of Rivers, Lord Grey, and some others of the queen’s party, were put to death at Pomfret by the Protector’s orders. The queen had taken sanctuary at Westminster, with her young son Richard, Duke of York; but Gloucester sent the Archbishop of Canterbury to demand that Elizabeth should give up the young duke, on pretence that his brother Edward wanted him for a playfellow in the Tower. The queen gave him up very reluctantly, and he was confined in the Tower with the desolate young king.

And now the Protector determined to seize the crown for himself. He employed some of his friends to spread a report that King Edward IV. had been married to another lady before he made the acquaintance of Elizabeth Grey, the mother of the young princes. Consequently, they argued, Elizabeth was not the late king’s real wife, nor were the young princes his legal heirs. The powerful Duke of Buckingham was Richard’s friend at that time. He went to the Guildhall in London, where the Lord Mayor and some of the citizens were assembled, used every art to persuade them to choose Richard for their king, and at last asked them in plain words whom they would have. The citizens kept silence; but some servants of Buckingham’s, at the lower end of the hall, and a few young apprentices, raised a feeble cry of “Long live King Richard!” Then Buckingham declared that Richard was duly chosen by the voice of the people, and went immediately to Baynard’s Castle, where the

Protector was then lodging, to acquaint him with the fact and offer him the crown.

The crafty Gloucester knew perfectly well what was going to happen, for he had planned it all beforehand with his friend Buckingham. But he pretended to be much surprised and disturbed when the duke offered him the crown. But at last he affected to be overcome by the arguments of Buckingham and those who came with the importunate duke, and consented to accept what he had been intriguing for years to gain—namely, the royal crown of England. And thus ended the six weeks' reign of Edward V.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### RICHARD III.

The murder of Edward V. and of the Duke of York—Richard's laws—Buckingham's revolt—Death of the Duke—Landing of Henry of Richmond at Milford Haven—Stanley deserts the King—Battle of Bosworth, and death of Richard—End of the Plantagenet rule in England.

GLoucester was now seated upon the throne of England, and saluted as Richard III.; but he did not feel himself secure. In the gloomy Tower of London there still lived the poor little Edward, whom he had robbed of a kingdom, and the still younger Richard, Duke of York, who would be the next heir after Edward; and while these two poor boys lived, the new king feared that some powerful friends of the House of York might arise to set up one of them, and pull down the usurper who wrongfully filled the English throne. Therefore, it is said, he commanded Sir Robert Brackenbury, the Governor of the Tower, to put the two young princes to death; but Brackenbury was an honest man, and would not undertake the wicked business. So Richard compelled him to give up the keys of the Tower for one night to a bad man named Tyrrell; and Tyrrell hired two murderers to kill the harmless lads while they slept. Edward and Richard were smothered by pillows piled upon

their faces, and the murderers buried them under a heap of stones beneath the staircase. There is some doubt as to the truth of this story, but certain it is that the royal lads were never heard of from that time; and when, nearly two hundred years afterwards, two dead bodies of boys were found beneath the very staircase where the princes were said to have been buried, most people thought that these were the remains of Edward V. and of his brother, the little Richard of York.

As the life of King Richard III. seemed to consist of hardly anything but crimes, it is only fair to mention what little good we know concerning him. Therefore it should be remembered that, directly after he came to the throne, he passed some excellent laws for the encouragement of commerce and the prosperity of England; nor must we forget that all the accounts we have of him were written under the Tudor kings, of whom you shall presently hear, and who had their own reasons for making Richard's memory appear as black and odious as possible.

The Duke of Buckingham had been very active in placing Richard on the throne, and the king rewarded him with wealth and honours. But Buckingham was discontented; perhaps because he thought Richard did not give him enough—perhaps because he suspected the new king might treat him as Lord Hastings and many other noblemen had been treated. Therefore he withdrew from court, refused to come when summoned, and at length determined to pull Richard from the throne, and set up a king of the Lancastrian party.

But who was this king to be? All the direct heirs of the Lancastrian line were dead, and it was difficult to find a member of that House whom the people could be induced to accept. Still, as there was no direct heir, Buckingham fixed upon a man who had very little right to the throne, trusting for success to fortune, and the known hatred the people bore to King Richard. Among the nobles who had escaped to Flanders during the wars of the Roses was young Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond, grandson of the Owen Tudor who had married Catherine, the widow of King Henry V. This Henry Tudor's mother was a descendant of old John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster; and Buckingham invited Henry to come into England, and strike a blow for the crown, proposing that he should marry Elizabeth, the daughter of Edward IV.,



RICHMOND CROWNED ON BOSWORTH FIELD.

and thus unite in himself the claims of the rival Houses of York and Lancaster.

The scheme was full of danger to King Richard; but at that time it failed. Buckingham was deserted by his followers, and compelled to hide himself from the vengeance of Richard, who promised a thousand pounds to any one who should deliver him up. Tempted by this great reward, Banister, a servant of the duke's, betrayed Buckingham into the king's hands; and the duke was beheaded without a trial at Salisbury. Thus Richard was enabled to wear his ill-gotten crown a little longer.

But Richard's fall was only delayed for a time. In 1485 Henry of Richmond landed at Milford Haven, in Wales, with some foreign troops, with the intention of risking a battle with King Richard. He hoped that the Welsh, his countrymen, would join him, and still more that the powerful Lord Stanley, his father-in-law, would come to his aid. Richard, who was as brave as he was wicked, at once collected an army, and posted himself at Leicester, in the centre of the island, ready to march against Richmond, wherever the earl might land. Lord Stanley, who had raised an army of his own retainers, kept up an appearance of friendship to Richard, who had Stanley's eldest son, Lord Strange, in his power, and threatened to take vengeance on the young lord if the old one showed any signs of treachery; but, in his heart, Stanley wished that Richmond might succeed, and resolved to join him at the first opportunity.

On a bright August evening, in 1485, Richard marched into Leicester with his army. He slept at the Bear Inn; and it was afterwards found that he kept his money in his bed; for that piece of furniture remained in the inn, and three hundred pounds in gold were discovered concealed in the bed-posts a century after these events. On the morning of the 21st Richard departed with his army from Leicester, and encamped on Redmore Heath, where Richmond was awaiting him, Lord Stanley's army being posted at some distance from the other two forces; and on the 22nd, early in the morning, began the famous battle of Bosworth.

The king fought like a lion, and showed, whatever his crimes might be, that he was a gallant soldier. But in the decisive moment, Lord Stanley appeared with his men, and declared in favour of Richmond.



Then King Richard, seeing all was lost, resolved not to survive his fall from the height to which he had climbed. With a wild shout of "Treason! treason!" he threw himself into the thickest of the fray, making directly for the spot where Richmond's standard was set up. He slew with his own hand Sir William Brandon, Richmond's standard-bearer. Others fell under the furious blows he dealt; but at length, exhausted and overpowered, he sank down covered with wounds, and was slain by the men-at-arms who came crowding up. His crown was found in a bush, and brought to Lord Stanley, who placed it on the brows of Richmond, saluting the earl by the title of King Henry VII.; and the rule of the Plantagenets in England was a thing of the past.

## PART VI. THE TUDOR KINGS.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### HENRY VII.

Changes in England—Advance of law and justice in Tudor times—Effects of the Wars of the Roses—Policy of Henry VII. towards the nobles—Encouragement of commerce—Alliance with Scotland—Henry's marriage with Elizabeth of York—Avarice of the King—Troubles during his reign.

A GREAT change now came over the whole of England—a change that soon showed itself in every class—in the Parliament, the nobles, and the people, and in the power of the king himself. Let us endeavour to understand in what this change consisted.

For many unhappy years there had been war and strife in England. Kings had been alternately set up and put down. Great armies had continually been marching to and fro in the land, trampling down the

corn in the wasted fields, and leaving behind them traces of their path in plundered towns and burning villages. Great nobles, who one day appeared at the head of hundreds or even thousands of followers, were led to the scaffold on the next. Thousands upon thousands of people had been kept in idleness by the great barons, living in a kind of rough plenty in and about the fortified castles, supported by the masters for whom they fought; and as battle after battle dyed the English earth red, and fortune changed from side to side, the pillage and bloodshed grew more and more horrible.

And now came the change. With Henry VII.'s accession the war ceased, and a new era of peace and progress began in England. Law and justice, whose voice had been too weak to be heard in the din of battle and in the brawling of factions, now begin to show themselves stronger than armed tyranny and oppression. No Warwick the "King-maker" is strong enough, by the mere number of the armed men who follow him and do his bidding, to set up and pull down kings at his will. No wicked king can murder his brother or his nephews in the gloomy Tower, as Edward IV. and Richard III. had done; for the times are past in which such deeds could be done without soon bringing down swift and certain vengeance upon the doer. The personal safety and the very life of a king no longer depend, in the times of which we have now to speak, on his ability to keep down the factious barons with a strong hand. No Edward II. or Richard II. could now be dethroned and secretly put away at the behest of a single wicked man or woman, for the dark and evil days of the middle ages are gone by. With greater enlightenment, with the spread of knowledge, and the love of what is good, arise the two words *justice* and *liberty*; and from the commencement of the Tudor rule until the present time, the meaning of these two great words have been better and better understood in our country, and Englishmen have learned to love justice and hate oppression. And as we are told that the service of the GREATEST MASTER whom a man can obey is "perfect freedom," so we have learned that in earthly things true liberty is found in cheerful and ready submission to good laws, and in heartily upholding what is right against what is wrong.

All classes had suffered from the wars of York and Lancaster; but

the great nobles had suffered by far the most. Many of the old baronial houses had quite vanished, and the survivors of others had become poor and weak.

Henry VII. took care that they should not regain sufficient power to become dangerous to him or to the nation. He wanted no Dukes of Buckingham, no king-making Earls of Warwick, around his throne. Therefore he took care to allow only a few retainers to each baron, and severely fined those who disobeyed. He saw that trade and commerce would make the people rich, and render them independent of the nobles; therefore he encouraged trade and commerce in every way, and built ships of war to protect the English merchantmen. He knew that the establishment of a friendly feeling with Scotland would be a boon to the English, as well as a security to his own throne; accordingly he gave his daughter Margaret in marriage to the Scottish King James IV.

Wise and politic as Henry was, he had unfortunately one great fault, which led him to commit much injustice, and lost him the love and respect of his subjects. He was excessively fond of gain. In order to increase his hoard, he often extorted great sums of money from any of his subjects whom he suspected of conspiring against him. He was especially distrustful of the House of York, though he strengthened his title by marrying the Princess Elizabeth, the daughter of Edward IV. By the end of his reign he had heaped together a vast mass of wealth. But he could not take it out of the world with him; and was fain, when he came to die, to beg his son and heir to make restitution to all whom he had wronged, and to release all poor debtors who were in prison for being unable to pay small sums. It is when a man is about to leave this world, and to give an account of his actions, that his sins most commonly "find him out."

On the whole, this Henry VII., if not a very estimable, was a very useful king to England. He was more clear-sighted than any of his predecessors, and saw not only what was good for England in the present, but what would be useful in the future.

Two insurrections, that troubled the peace of England in Henry's time, formed the chief events in his reign. Of these we must speak in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE REIGN OF HENRY VII. CONCLUDED.

Discontent of the Yorkist party—Lambert Simnel personates the Earl of Warwick—Battle of Stoke—Simnel pardoned—Perkin Warbeck's rebellion—Warbeck kindly received in Scotland—Rising of the Cornishmen—Warbeck retires to Ireland—Invades England—Is defeated and hanged at Tyburn—Katharine of Arragon married to Prince Arthur, and afterwards to Prince Henry—Death of Henry VII.

THE manifest jealousy displayed by the king in his dealings with the Yorkists soon created discontent in England. Henry was continually in terror of plots against his rule or against his life; and, indeed, it cannot be said that his fears were altogether groundless, though they caused him to commit many acts of injustice. Therefore some of the Yorkist party—and the Queen Dowager Elizabeth, it is said, among them—determined to revenge themselves on Henry, by endeavouring to drive him from the throne of England.

There had been for a long time one prisoner in the Tower of London, whom Henry guarded with especial strictness. This prisoner was the young Earl of Warwick, son of the murdered Duke of Clarence, and grandson to the King-maker. He was the real heir to the throne of England, and therefore Henry was afraid of him. Now certain Yorkists, under the direction of Simon, a priest, brought forward a youth named Lambert Simnel, the son of a baker, and declared that this youth was the young Earl of Warwick, who, they said, had escaped from the Tower, and should be acknowledged as the true King of England. Simnel was first brought out in Ireland, where many were deceived into thinking he was really Richard Plantagenet. From thence he invaded England, with an army chiefly consisting of Irishmen, and some Germans sent over by the old Duchess of Burgundy, a sister of Edward IV. King Henry marched out boldly against him; and on the 6th of June, 1487, a battle was fought at Stoke, in Nottinghamshire.

Lambert Simnel's troops were completely defeated; their leaders were



slain, and the youth himself fell into the king's hands. Henry acted with a leniency very rare in those times. He contented himself with levying heavy fines upon those Yorkists who had favoured the rebels; as for Simnel, he was contemptuously pardoned, and made a scullion in the king's kitchen, from which low office he rose in time to that of falconer.

A quarrel broke out with France, and war was declared. Henry persuaded Parliament to vote him a large sum of money for the expenses of the contest; and, as soon as he had it, made peace with the French king, on condition of receiving a great sum more; so that his subjects declared Henry made the English pay for the war, and the French for the peace.

A far more dangerous rebellion than that of the baker's boy, Lambert Simnel, soon arose. A young man, whose real name is supposed to have been Peter or Perkin Warbeck, the son of a Flemish Jew, gave out that he was Richard, Duke of York, the younger of the two princes whom Richard III. had sent to the Tower. He declared that he had escaped from his prison, and called upon all true Englishmen to assist him, as he was the undoubted heir to the English throne. The old Duchess Margaret of Burgundy acknowledged Perkin for her nephew, and gave him every assistance; and as he happened to have features greatly resembling those of Edward IV., many people honestly believed that he was really the Duke of York, and were ready to help his enterprise.

Warbeck was welcomed in France. Thence he proceeded to Scotland, where James IV. not only received him with kindness, but gave the Lady Catherine Gordon to him in marriage, and led an army into the north of England to support Warbeck's claims. The English did not, however, show any great readiness to come forward for Warbeck; so James IV. sent him away into Ireland.

A number of Cornishmen, angry at being taxed by the king on the pretext of a Scottish war, marched towards London, armed and ready for mischief. The king's troops met them at Blackheath, near Greenwich; and the Cornishmen, who, though brave, had no chance of standing against disciplined soldiery, were completely defeated. Henry, who was not cruel, except where his fears or his jealousy had been aroused, behaved mercifully to the rebels. He only punished their leaders, and then set all the common men free, and sent them home sadder and wiser men.

Perkin Warbeck now landed again in England, in 1496, with a large army; but when Henry marched against him, he was seized with fear, deserted his friends, and took refuge in the Abbey of Beaulieu, in Hampshire. He was persuaded to trust himself to the king's mercy; and after having been paraded through London, exposed to the insults and laughter of the populace, was sent a prisoner to the Tower. Here he formed a friendship with the young Earl of Warwick, whom Simnel had personated; and it is said that the two prisoners formed a plot to escape from prison. Perhaps Henry had determined to get rid of both his prisoners. Be this as it may, in 1499 Warwick was beheaded and Warbeck hanged.

Henry had caused his eldest son Arthur to marry the Spanish Princess, Katharine of Arragon, daughter of the great monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella; and the parents of the princess, who were very wealthy, had given her a large dowry. In a few months Prince Arthur died, and his younger brother, Prince Henry, became heir to the throne; so there was some talk of sending the widowed Katharine home to her own country. In this case it would, however, have been necessary to give back her dowry; and King Henry VII. was notably quick to receive money, but very slow to pay it back. He accordingly proposed that Katharine should marry Henry, the new Prince of Wales, and that both she and her money should remain in England; and, to his great satisfaction, this arrangement was carried into effect. Indeed, Henry's avarice gained upon him as he grew older; and the Princess Katharine wrote to her father, complaining bitterly that she had not a farthing allowed her, except the sum necessary for food; and even this allowance was so niggardly, that she could not keep out of debt.

Henry VII. died in 1509. He was by far the wealthiest of the English kings, and left an enormous sum in the treasury at his death. His system of making fines the punishment for almost every crime committed by the rich had filled his coffers; and he had, moreover, employed two lawyers, named Empsom and Dudley, to extort as much money as possible from all those holders of estates in whose title they could find any fault. These two men became so odious to the people by their exactions, that they were put to death early in the next reign.

The splendid discovery of the continent of America was made by the

Genoese navigator, Christopher Columbus, in Henry's reign. Columbus made four voyages to the West. During the first and second he discovered the West India Islands. It was on his third voyage, in 1498, that he first landed on the coast of South America. Spain and Portugal were greatly enriched by these discoveries; and soon the English began to send out navigators on their own account, as you shall hear presently.

## CHAPTER III.

### HENRY VIII.

State of affairs at the King's accession—Character and appearance of Henry VIII.—The Reformation in Germany—Cardinal Wolsey—His power and arrogance—Francis I. and Charles V.—The Field of the Cloth of Gold—The King's divorce from Katharine of Arragon—His marriage with Anne Boleyn—Death of Katharine of Arragon.

THE reign of Henry VIII. began so prosperously, that the English looked forward to happier times than the country had enjoyed for many a long year. There was no one to question the king's right to the throne. The avarice of the late king had filled the treasury with an enormous sum of money. England had, during the last reign, attained a wealth and importance it had never before possessed; and everything seemed to give tokens of peace, comfort, and prosperity.

The king himself was just the man whom the English loved to see on the throne. He had a thorough English look about him—a large handsome form and a rosy face, with clear blue eyes, and an expression of frankness and good humour. "Brave King Hal—Bluff King Hal," as the people delighted to call him—was a favourite from the very day on which he mounted the throne; and not all the tyranny and wrong of his thirty-eight years' rule could wean the faithful hearts of the English from him.

But under this fair outside mighty vices lay concealed. The unbroken prosperity of the first part of his reign rendered him impatient of contradiction, and the incessant flattery with which his courtiers surrounded





THE FIELD OF THE CLOTH OF GOLD.

him could hardly fail to make him a tyrant. At last he came to consider himself as one whose will, right or wrong, must be unhesitatingly obeyed; and when at last sickness and pain, and the weakness of increasing age, that spares kings no more than it spares beggars, came upon him, he grew absolutely furious, and raged and tore like a wild beast.

The beginning of Henry's reign, which had seemed to promise peace, was yet signalized by two short wars—one against France, the other against Scotland. In France occurred a battle, or rather a skirmish, known as the "Battle of the Spurs," because the French, after a very short resistance, fled as fast as their horses, urged by the spur, could carry them. King Harry took several towns, and then a peace was concluded, and the French king, Francis I., married Henry's sister. In Scotland one victory put an end to the strife. The brave young Earl of Surrey gained a great battle over the Scots at Flodden Field, in Northumberland, where James IV. was slain, and his army destroyed.

For many years after Henry's accession the most powerful man in England was Cardinal Wolsey, Archbishop of York. This remarkable man was born at Ipswich; and those who envied his great fortune spread the report that his father had been a butcher in that town; but the report was untrue. As a boy Wolsey showed great aptitude for learning, and on being introduced to the notice of King Henry VII., proved himself shrewd and active in affairs of state. By the time Henry VIII. came to the throne he had already risen to eminence and power; and the new king was so pleased with him, that Wolsey soon won the entire confidence of Henry, and was employed in the weightiest affairs of state. The haughty cardinal took advantage of his position to further his own ambitious views. He amassed vast sums of money, and lived in a more splendid style than the king himself. The two most powerful foreign princes of the time, Francis I., King of France, and Charles V., Emperor of Germany, paid court to Wolsey, in hopes that the powerful minister would advise his master to be friendly to them; and Wolsey, on his part, took bribes from both, and did nothing for either.

Both Charles and Francis were so desirous of securing the alliance of the English king, that Henry adopted the haughty motto, "He whom I defend is the master."

In 1519 Henry went to France to visit King Francis. The two kings met on a plain between the towns of Guisnes and Ardrès; and the magnificence and pomp of their meeting is well expressed in the name, "The Field of the Cloth of Gold," given to the place where the interview was held. The two kings and their respective courts vied with each other in the display of riches and splendour; and during a fortnight vast sums of money were squandered in tournaments, feasts, and revels of every kind. But no good result was gained by all the useless display, and the two kings parted, less than ever disposed to trust one another.

At this time a great reformation or improvement in religious matters had begun. Many people were dissatisfied with the teachings and practices of the Romish Church; and Martin Luther, a German priest, put himself at the head of those who sought to separate truth from error. He declared that the Bible was the Word of God, and that in the Bible, and not in whatever a Pope or priest might say, was the truth to be found; and he translated the Bible into German, that the people might read it for themselves, and learn what was right. Many persons, first in Germany and then elsewhere, saw that he was right, and followed his teaching, or rather the teaching of the Bible; but King Henry wrote a book against Luther, and sent it to the Pope, who was highly delighted to have such a powerful champion, and gave Henry the title "Defender of the Faith." This title the English monarchs have retained, though it is a better and a purer faith that they are now bound to defend. Soon some of the princes of Germany formed themselves into a company, and pledged themselves to defend the new religion; and as they protested against the attempts of the Emperor Charles to put them down by force, they called themselves "*Protestants*," and their faith came to be called "*the Protestant religion*."

When Wolsey was at the height of his power, he quarrelled with the Duke of Buckingham, the son of that duke who had been executed in 1483 for rebelling against Richard III. The haughty cardinal swore he would be revenged on his adversary; and he kept his word; for he persuaded Henry to have Buckingham beheaded on a charge of treason against the king.

After Henry had been married many years to Katharine of Arragon,

he suddenly discovered, or pretended to discover, that his conscience was troubled because his faithful queen had been the widow of his brother Arthur, and therefore Henry's sister-in-law; wherefore the king said he feared his marriage with her was not legal. The truth seems to have been that the king was tired of Katharine, and wished to marry Anne Boleyn, the young and beautiful daughter of a Kentish knight, Sir Thomas Boleyn. Accordingly Henry applied to his favourite Wolsey, and to the Pope, to procure him a divorce from Katharine; that is, to pronounce his marriage with her void, and leave him free to marry again. Both Wolsey and the Pope showed themselves very loth to do what Henry wished: the king saw this, and did not forget to revenge himself on both of them when an opportunity came. At last, however, the Pope sent to England a cardinal named Campeggio, to try the matter together with Wolsey. Queen Katharine appealed to her tyrannical husband, and refused to answer Wolsey or Campeggio at all; at length, in 1533, a sentence of divorce was pronounced by Cranmer, whom the king had made Archbishop of Canterbury, and King Henry publicly married the fair Anne Boleyn.

The discarded Katharine, who was much beloved by the people, continued to look upon herself as the king's lawful wife; and most of the king's subjects were of her opinion. She never recovered her spirits, which had been broken by the insults put upon her; and, after living for three years in retirement, she died at Kimbolton, and was buried in Peterborough Cathedral.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE REIGN OF HENRY VIII. CONCLUDED.

Disgrace and death of Wolsey—Henry proclaims himself head of the Church—Death of Sir T. More and Bishop Fisher—Execution of Anne Boleyn—Jane Seymour—Suppression of monasteries—Anne of Cleves—Catherine Howard—Catherine Parr—Death of the King.

HENRY had been deeply offended by the reluctance shown by the Pope and by his favourite Wolsey to proceed in the matter of the divorce;



WOLSEY RECEIVED BY THE ABBOT OF LEICESTER.

and the beautiful Anne Boleyn, moreover, was an enemy of the haughty cardinal. Thus, in 1530, while the matter of the divorce was under consideration, Wolsey, who for many years had been next to the king in power, fell into disgrace, and was deprived of his offices, and ordered to retire to his diocese of York. For a time it seemed as if the fickle and changeable king might take his old servant into favour again; but at last Wolsey was ordered to come to London to answer a charge of high treason. Quite broken-hearted at this harsh treatment, the aged cardinal set out on his mournful journey; but when he had gone as far as Leicester Abbey, his strength failed, and he could travel no farther. The abbot received him kindly; and Wolsey lay down to rest his weary limbs on the bed from which he never rose again. Before he died he spoke these memorable words: "If I had served my God half as faithfully as I have served my king, He would not have forsaken me in my old age." But the great cardinal had been too much attached to the pomps and splendours of the world to do his duty as a churchman. He had sought to obtain wealth and power and worldly honour for himself; and in the Book that cannot err we are told that it is impossible to serve God and Mammon.

In 1434 Henry declared he would no longer submit to the authority of the Pope, as his ancestors had done. No more Peter's pence, or taxes for Rome, were to be levied in England; and the Pope's edicts, or, as they were called, Bulls, were no longer to be read or obeyed. Henry, moreover, said that he himself would be the head of the English or Anglican Church; and all who held any state office were obliged to take an oath acknowledging the king as the Church's head. The king's pretensions were so new and unexpected, that some of the wisest and best people in England could not agree to them; and among those who refused to acknowledge Henry's right to be called the head of the Church were the wise and good Chancellor, Sir Thomas More, and the pious old clergyman, Fisher, Bishop of Rochester.

Henry had now grown so tyrannical that he would hear of no opposition to his will. Sir Thomas More, who was beloved by all the nation, and the good old Bishop Fisher, who was more than eighty years of age, were both thrown into prison in the Tower of London; and as they

would not say that the king was right, when in their own hearts they believed him to be wrong, they were both beheaded. But their death was a gain to them ; for, so long as English history is read, they will be remembered as two honest men who laid down their lives bravely and cheerfully rather than tell a lie. When More was in prison he was visited by his affectionate daughter, Margaret Roper, who comforted him to the last hour of his life ; and when, by the order of the cruel tyrant Henry, More's head was put up on one of the city gates, as a warning to all against incurring the king's anger, Margaret Roper contrived to have it taken down ; but had the head remained where Henry had caused it to be placed, the shame would not have been More's, but the king's who had unjustly and cruelly deprived a good man of his life.

The new queen, Anne Boleyn, did not long retain the affections of Henry, who, as he grew older, became too selfish and cruel to love any one but himself. He had seen another lady, named Jane Seymour, whom he wished to marry ; and the unfortunate Anne was falsely accused of being unfaithful to her husband. She was imprisoned in the Tower, and soon afterwards beheaded ; and on the very day after her death Henry married Jane Seymour.

Anne was not so much pitied as she might have been by the people ; for though no one believed she was justly put to death, it was remembered against her that she had been too ambitious, and regardless of the feelings of others ; and only six months before, she had flaunted in a yellow dress and cruelly exulted when the news of the death of poor Katharine of Arragon reached the court. Queen Katharine had left a daughter named Mary, and Anne Boleyn also was the mother of a child named Elizabeth : both these princesses afterwards became queens of England.

Henry now determined, as head of the Church, to suppress the convents and monasteries in England. A great many religious houses that had existed for hundreds of years were done away with, their lands seized by the king, who kept them for his own use or gave them to his courtiers, and their wealth poured into the royal treasury. A small pittance was allowed to the monks and nuns, who were thus cast on

the world; but there is no doubt that much injustice and cruelty accompanied the forced changes now made. The king cared only for himself and his own profit. He was so tyrannical that he insisted that all should profess the religion which he professed; and the difficulty was to find out what his religion was.

Queen Jane Seymour did not long enjoy the dignity to which the fickle king's favour had raised her. The year after her marriage she became the mother of a prince, who was christened Edward; and in a few days she died. The king, who really seems to have been attached to Jane, wore a mourning habit for six months; but he was soon looking out for another wife.

This time a foreign princess, Anne of Cleves, was chosen to be the cruel king's consort. She had been represented to Henry as being beautiful, and a portrait of her that was shown to him had greatly taken his fancy. But when Anne came to England, Henry found that she was not handsome at all. He was greatly angered, and spoke of her very rudely to his courtiers as "a great Flanders mare." Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex, who had counselled the match, fell into disfavour, and was soon after beheaded; and the king parted from Anne of Cleves after a short time. She was unwilling to return to her own country; accordingly a pension was awarded to her, on which she lived contentedly enough for many years; and on the whole she may be considered the most fortunate of Henry's wives.

Catherine Howard, niece of the Duke of Norfolk, was chosen as the king's fifth bride; but her reign was very short. She was accused of various misdemeanours, and it seems that, before her marriage with Henry, her conduct had been bad; so she was beheaded, and for the sixth time Henry was seeking a wife.

No foreign princess would listen for a moment to the idea of being married to such a tyrant as Henry. One lady to whom the proposal was made replied that "if she had two heads she would place one of them at his disposal," but, having only one, she preferred keeping it on her shoulders. It was known, moreover, that King Henry's temper was becoming more and more furious as age and infirmity came upon him. A wise and learned lady, Catherine Parr, the widow of Lord Latimer,





ANNE BOLEYN IN THE TOWER.

consented to risk her life by becoming Henry's sixth wife ; and so discreet and gentle was her conduct, that she not only escaped with her life, but kept the affection of Henry till he died. Once, indeed, he listened to evil counsellors, who told him that the queen had spoken against his title of "head of the Church," and the mere suspicion so enraged the king that he gave orders to have her at once conveyed to the Tower and accused of treason ; but Catherine, hearing of this, spoke to the king so meekly and wisely that he soon made friends with her again, and when the Chancellor came with a guard to arrest the queen, the king assailed him with many opprobrious names and drove him away.

But though the gentle Catherine had some influence over the king's furious temper, towards all others he behaved more like a maniac than a sane man. A terribly painful disease in his leg made him rage like a wild beast, and he was suspicious of all who came near him. He was especially afraid that the Roman Catholics would proclaim Mary, the daughter of Katharine of Arragon, queen after his death, instead of Edward, Prince of Wales, the son of Jane Seymour. Therefore, the Duke of Norfolk and the gallant Earl of Surrey, his son, were imprisoned and condemned to death ; for they were the principal Roman Catholics in England. Surrey was executed ; but when the death warrant of the Duke of Norfolk had already been signed, and it appeared that he must undoubtedly perish, he was saved at the last moment by a memorable event. This was nothing less than the death of the cruel king himself, who died only a few hours before the time at which Norfolk was to be beheaded. Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, stood by the dying monarch's bedside, and begged him to give some sign that he died in the faith of a Christian, trusting in the mercy of HIM who died on the cross for all mankind. Henry feebly pressed the Archbishop's hand, and expired.

During the latter part of his reign, this king was undoubtedly a wicked and cruel tyrant, ruling according to his own will, and caring nothing for law or justice. But it is only right that we should remember the few good deeds he did. He set free the slaves who still remained on the royal estates, so that after his time we hear no more of slavery in England. In the earlier part of his reign he seems sincerely to have

## DEATH OF HENRY VIII.—EDWARD VI.

desired the welfare of his people ; and not a little of his cruelty may be ascribed to the bodily suffering he endured for years before his death, and which he had not the patience to bear as a Christian should bear pain. A great number of Englishmen were put to death during this reign.

On the other hand, the commerce and wealth of the nation increased year by year. The whole of the Bible was translated into English. Learning greatly improved ; and to the great Cardinal Wolsey is due the credit of having founded two colleges, one in the university of Oxford, and the other in Ipswich, his native town. The royal navy now consisted of fifty-three ships, and England's power at sea began to be felt and respected. Several towns which have now become great and important, among others Liverpool and Manchester, took their rise in the time of Henry VIII.

## CHAPTER V.

### EDWARD VI.

The Council of Regency—War with Scotland—Battle of Pinkie—Protector Somerset—Strife in the Church—The Prayer-Book—Insurrection of Ket—Execution of Somerset—Intrigues of the Earl of Warwick—Death of Edward VI.—Willoughby's voyage to the North.

THE imperious Henry VIII. had died, as the haughtiest king must die, when the King of kings says, "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther ;" and now the crown of England was to be placed on the brow of a feeble boy, only ten years of age. Young Edward VI., son of Jane Seymour, was duly proclaimed ; and when the late king's will was opened, it was found that he had made arrangements for the safety and government of England during the period that must elapse before his young son could rule for himself.

Sixteen nobles had been appointed as a council of regency ; and John Seymour, the brother of Queen Jane Seymour, and consequently uncle of the young Edward, was chosen Protector of the realm and guardian

of the king. Great hopes were entertained, from the mild and amiable temper and studious character of the young Edward, that he would one day be a great and wise king, under whom England might be prosperous and happy; but he was always feeble in health, and never lived to be a man: thus we have now only to chronicle the events of a short reign of six years; but some of these events are very important.

It was in the year 1547 that Edward VI. came to the throne; and in the same year a war broke out with Scotland. The Scots were greatly averse from any interference of the English in their affairs, and always feared that they might become subjects of the English king. Now, Henry VIII. had intended that his son Edward should marry Mary, the young Queen of Scotland, that the two crowns should thus be united into one, in the same way in which the claims of York and Lancaster had been united by the marriage of his father, Henry VII., and Elizabeth of York; but the Scots would not hear of this scheme; and accordingly the Protector sent out an army against them. The battle of Pinkie or Musselburgh was fought on the 10th of September, 1547, where the English gained a complete victory. But the Scottish nobles would not submit, though they were defeated. They sent away the young queen into France, where she afterwards married Francis, the son of the French King Henry II.; and soon the attention of the Protector was turned to other objects, and the Scots were left to themselves for a time.

This John Seymour was a bold, ambitious man; and, like many other noblemen suddenly raised to a great position, he thought his power greater than it really was, and excited discontent by his scheming for his own elevation. He pretended that the late king had intended to make him Duke of Somerset, and the lords of the council were afraid to oppose him. So he assumed that title, with a large estate and much money, and built himself a splendid palace, called Somerset House, on the banks of the Thames, in what was then, and is still, called the Strand, near one of the city gates. To build this palace, he destroyed churches and chapels, using the stones and wood for his own purposes; and thus much discontent was excited.

The whole of this short reign was a period of strife between the Roman Catholics and the Protestants. There were still a great many



people in England who held firm to the old religion; and the Princess Mary, who was the next heir to the throne after Edward, was a strict Catholic, while Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, was at the head of the Protestant party. Cranmer, with the assistance of some learned and pious clergymen, composed the Prayer-book which we still use in our churches, and the Catechism which we are taught in our schools; and the Psalms were translated into English, and put into verse, that they might be read in the churches. There was much distress in England in King Edward's time. The poor people missed the old convents, at whose gates they had often been fed and clothed by charitable hands; and many risings took place among the artizans and peasantry.

The chief of these occurred in Norfolk, and was headed by a tanner named Ket. It was soon suppressed, and Ket was hanged. A poor woman named Joan Bouchier, commonly called the Maid of Kent, was cruelly burned to death, because she differed from the government party in matters of religion, and persisted in maintaining her opinion; but in general this reign was free from religious persecution.

The Protector Somerset became more and more elated. The people were especially angry with him for signing the death warrant of his own brother, Admiral Seymour, who opposed the Protector, and tried to induce the Princess Elizabeth to marry him, probably in the hope of one day becoming King of England. The Protector himself underwent the same fate. He was accused in 1551 of treason and felony, and he had made so many enemies that he could not save himself. He was found guilty, and was executed on Tower Hill. In the next few years many noblemen were beheaded at the same place, and for the same reason—namely, ambition to rule, and attempting to exert a power they had no right to exercise.

The king was growing weaker and weaker. That terrible disease, consumption, was making his thin cheek thinner day by day; and long before his death, the great question whether a Protestant or a Roman Catholic should succeed him, occupied the thoughts of all around the throne. John Dudley, Earl of Warwick, a bold, ambitious man, succeeded to the power the Duke of Somerset had wielded; and now it became that nobleman's chief object to bring his own family as near the throne as possible.

For this purpose he caused one of his sons, Lord Guildford Dudley, to marry Lady Jane Grey, a daughter of the Marchioness of Dorset, and an amiable young Protestant lady, descended from Mary, the sister of Henry VIII. ; and Warwick, who had now become Duke of Northumberland, used every effort to induce the poor dying young king to make a will, appointing Lady Jane his successor, and excluding his own sisters Mary and Elizabeth. The young king signed the will, and soon afterwards died, in May, 1553.

Young as King Edward was when he died, he did not pass away without leaving behind him a great and important memorial of his short reign. This was the foundation of that splendid school for boys, Christ's Hospital, in Newgate Street, which still flourishes at the present day, and where many thousands of English lads have been educated, so that they have become useful and prosperous men. The boys still wear the long blue coats and yellow stockings, like those in which the scholars used to be dressed at the time the school was founded. Only two days after the arrangements for the new school and for other hospitals had been concluded, the young king died.

A voyage to the cold Northern Seas was undertaken in this reign by two bold sailors, named Sir Hugh Willoughby and Richard Chancellor. They wanted to find a new way to get to India, and thought they might do so by sailing through the Arctic Sea to the north of Europe. Sir Hugh Willoughby, with the crew in his ship, was frozen to death ; but Chancellor, who commanded the second ship, contrived to reach the port of Archangel, in Russia, whence he travelled overland to Moscow, then the capital of that great country, and paid a visit to the court of the emperor or czar.

## CHAPTER VI.

### QUEEN MARY I.

Religious persecution—Lady Jane Grey proclaimed Queen—Superseded by Mary—Execution of the Dukes of Northumberland and Suffolk—Restoration of the Roman Catholic religion—The Queen's marriage—Wyatt's insurrection and death—Execution of Lady Jane Grey and Lord Guildford Dudley—The Protestant martyrs—Loss of Calais—Death of Mary.

HERE we enter upon another reign, shorter still than that of Edward VI., but full of mournful and terrible doings. True religion is a blessed thing, pure and holy, full of peace and good-will toward men; but when sinful men, full of fierceness and violence, meddle with religious matters, they turn religion itself into a mockery, and under its name do the evil deeds of pride and revenge. So it had been in the reign of the tyrant Henry VIII., who, under the name of religious zeal, put to death many who would not pay him all the submission his pride demanded; and so it was again in this reign of Queen Mary, who had been brought up in the Roman Catholic religion, who had herself suffered persecution for her faith, and whose advisers had taught her that in persecuting and slaying those who differed from her in belief, she was doing God and the true religion a service; as if the gracious Saviour, whose whole life on earth was passed in deeds of mercy and forgiveness, could be served with such weapons as the faggot, the stake, and the headsman's axe! In Mary's reign some hundreds of people were burned to death because they professed the Protestant religion. This was very dreadful, and the shame and guilt of it has blackened the memory of the queen; but we must not forget that the Romanists were not the only sect who persecuted their enemies, and that in this respect Henry VIII. had been more cruel than ever Mary was. In those days men were fierce and vindictive, and could not understand that killing a man is not the way to convert him from the wrong to the right.

Immediately upon the death of Edward VI., Dudley, Duke of North-



umberland, proclaimed his daughter-in-law, the Lady Jane Grey, Queen of England, and went with the Duke of Suffolk to offer her the crown. Lady Jane had no wish to enjoy that dangerous honour. She was of a gentle, studious disposition, and would greatly have preferred to live quietly in a private station; but she had not the strength to resist the persuasions of the dukes, and allowed them to set her up as a queen against her own inclination. Mary, the daughter of Henry VIII. and Katharine of Arragon, was undoubtedly the real heir to the crown; and the people generally were in her favour. She was at Norwich when her brother died. Her friends at once proclaimed her, and she set out for London to claim her rights. As she approached the capital, the few whom Northumberland and Suffolk had persuaded to take up the cause of the Lady Jane quite lost heart, and deserted her. She was committed as a prisoner to the Tower after a very few days. The Dukes of Northumberland and Suffolk were likewise imprisoned as traitors, and soon after perished on the scaffold; and Mary took possession of the throne.

The new queen at once began to restore the Roman Catholic religion in England, so far as it was in her power to restore it. She was thoroughly sincere in her religious belief, and showed her sincerity by giving back to the Romish Church much property which her father Henry had seized upon for his own use. She released the Roman Catholic bishops, Gardiner and Bonner, from prison; and unfortunately listened to their evil counsel, and to the bad advice of others, who constantly urged upon her that by severity against the Protestants, and by no other means, could she restore the ancient faith in England. For a time, however, she held out against their persuasions; and her reign might have passed quietly enough, but for an event which alarmed and angered the people, and produced much unhappiness alike to England and to herself. This event was Mary's marriage with the King of Spain.

Philip II. came to be looked upon, not only in England, but in all Europe, with fear and hatred. In his own vast dominions he violently persecuted all who claimed freedom of conscience in religious matters. A horrible court, called the Inquisition, was supported by him; and by this court the unhappy people who incurred the charge of heresy were imprisoned, tortured, and in many cases sentenced to death by fire. In

Madrid and elsewhere, at stated periods, numbers of poor creatures were brought out and publicly roasted to death, in the sight of thousands of spectators; and each of these cruel burnings was called in Spanish an *auto-da-fé*, or "act of faith." The English feared, and with reason, that Philip would introduce the Inquisition in England; and it is not to be wondered at that they were bitterly opposed to the intended marriage of their queen with such a man. At this time Philip had not yet succeeded to the Spanish crown.

Thus it was that a brave but rash knight, Sir Thomas Wyatt, determined to prevent this marriage by force. He gave out that England would be ruined if Mary and Philip ruled in the land. He collected a number of men, with the intention of deposing Mary and setting up Lady Jane Grey once more in her stead. He marched to London, expecting to find the people all ready to join him; but he was grievously mistaken. Lud Gate was shut against him. The citizens took up arms in defence of the queen, who showed great courage and firmness at this dangerous time. Wyatt's followers were fiercely attacked and fled, and Wyatt was compelled to yield himself a prisoner. He was condemned to death as a traitor, and beheaded on the 12th of April, 1554.

And now the advisers of Mary persuaded her that she would never reign in peace so long as Jane lived; and, moreover, she was told that the death of her own sister, the Princess Elizabeth, who favoured the Protestants, and might at any time be set up as a rival queen, was necessary for her safety. Mary steadfastly refused to shed the blood of her sister, though she caused Elizabeth to be imprisoned for a time in the Tower, and afterwards in a country house, in the custody of a Catholic gentleman; but in the matter of Lady Jane Grey she yielded. That gentle and unfortunate lady was sent once more to the Tower, and soon after executed with her husband, Lord Guildford Dudley, on the Tower Green. She died as became a Christian, meekly but firmly, trusting to the mercy of her Saviour, and acknowledging that she had been wrong in weakly allowing her relations to place on her head a crown that belonged by right to another. She was quite young—not eighteen years of age—when she thus lamentably perished.

In July of the same year Mary carried into effect her intention of



EXECUTION OF LADY JANE GREY.

marrying Philip, the son of the Emperor Charles V., afterwards known as Philip of Spain. The union was an unhappy one in every respect, and embittered the few remaining years of the queen's life. Philip saw that the English hated and distrusted him. He did not care for Mary, who loved him with a true affection, and was unhappy at his indifference and neglect. He soon left England, and only once returned to pay his wife a short visit.

In the year 1555 a terrible persecution of the Protestants began. Thomas Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was looked upon by Mary with peculiar dislike, on account of the part he had taken in the divorce of her mother, Katharine of Arragon. He was induced, in a weak moment, to sign a recantation, or acknowledgment that he had been in error. But it was determined that he should, nevertheless, die; and as the time for his death drew near, all his courage returned to him, and he prepared to die like a martyr. He was burned to death in the old cathedral city of Oxford. When the faggots were lit that were to consume him, Cranmer stretched forth his right hand, with which he had signed the confession, and held it in the flames till it was consumed, crying out, "This hand has offended!" The flames then closed around him, and he soon died. In the same manner were put to death Bishop Hooper, of Gloucester; Ridley, of London; and Latimer, of Worcester. The two latter were burned together at Oxford on the 16th of October, 1555. Latimer was a venerable old man, more than eighty years of age. Ridley, who was younger, distinguished himself by his courage; and just before the faggots were kindled, he cried out to Latimer, "Be of good cheer, brother; for we shall this day light up such a flame in England as, I trust in God, shall never be extinguished!" And he spoke truly; for the remembrance of the faith and constancy of those martyrs, who died rather than deny their Saviour or withhold the honour due to Him, will be remembered as long as England exists.

This short and mournful reign drew to a close amid persecution and discontent at home, and failure and disgrace abroad. A war broke out with France; and Calais, which had been in the possession of the English ever since the days when Edward III. conquered it, more than 200 years before, was recaptured by the French. The loss of this city

weighed so heavily on Mary's mind as to make her declare that, when she died, the word "Calais" would be found engraven on her heart. But so far as the English were concerned, the loss was not very heavy; for Calais had cost them a large sum of money every year, and had never been of any great use.

The queen's health now failed utterly. She had long suffered from a painful disease; and at length, in 1558, she expired, after, with her last breath, appointing the Princess Elizabeth her successor. Her subjects had little cause to mourn her death.

## CHAPTER VII.

### QUEEN ELIZABETH.

Joy at Elizabeth's accession—Prudence of the Queen—Protestantism restored—The Pope declares Elizabeth illegitimate—Great men in Elizabeth's reign—Drake, Raleigh, Gilbert, and Shakespeare—Colony founded by Raleigh—Sir Humphrey Gilbert's gallantry—Shakespeare's genius.

WE now turn from the dark and gloomy reign of Mary to a great and glorious time—a time when true religion spread its light far and wide over England; when great men arose in numbers, and made the name of our country famous throughout the earth; when bold navigators caused the power of England to be feared and respected abroad, while gallant admirals defended her coasts at home; when, under the rule of a great and wise queen, the realm recovered from the injuries it had received during the late days of cruelty and superstition.

When Elizabeth succeeded to the throne, the English people showed much joy. On her entrance into London, the citizens rang the church bells, illuminated their windows, and lighted up huge bonfires in the streets. Throughout the country it was felt that a great and heavy burden had been removed, and men looked forward with hope and confidence to the better days that seemed dawning upon them.

Elizabeth was only twenty-five years old when her sister's death placed

her upon the throne; but she had long been popular with the English. She had always shown herself anxious to cultivate the good opinion of the lower classes, and she had in a great degree succeeded. Her tall commanding presence, full of spirit and dignity, her free outspoken way of expressing herself, the brisk cheerfulness of her nature, impressed them favourably, as contrasted with the gloomy troubled aspect of her bigoted priest-governed sister; and her very faults were such as the English had always looked upon without any especial anger or dislike. She had in her character a strong spice of her father, King Henry VIII., and was imperious, proud, and at times tyrannical; but she had excellent sense, a rare faculty in finding out merit, and a kingly liberality in rewarding it. She loved her people and trusted them; and when the English found this out, they frankly and heartily returned their queen love for love and confidence for confidence: they dubbed her “the Good Queen Bess,” and frankly and heartily yielded her true obedience, and help in time of danger, as became the loyal subjects of a brave English queen.

Within a short time after the commencement of her reign, the Church of England was firmly established. The queen was too wise to make a very violent and sudden change; but gradually the improvements proposed in the reign of Edward VI. were carried into effect. The liturgy—that is, the read service of the Church—was arranged in the English language, that all might understand the prayers that were spoken and the chapters that were read; and the queen was especially careful, by maintaining her post as head of the Church, to prevent the Pope from regaining power in England.

The queen was unmarried; and many foreign princes offered at various times to become her husband. Among these were the King of France, Charles IX., one of the worst princes who ever sat on the throne of that country; Eric, King of Sweden, the son of Gustavus Vasa; and Philip of Spain, who had been the cold, neglectful husband of the unhappy Mary: but, partly, perhaps, from the fear of losing the affections of her people as Mary had done, by an imprudent match, partly, no doubt, from reluctance to lessen her own power, Elizabeth refused in every instance, and declared her intention of living a single life, and devoting herself



ELIZABETH'S ENTRY INTO LONDON.

entirely to the welfare of her people; and in this resolution she remained firm to the end of her days.

The Pope was very angry at being deprived of all rule and power in England. In the year 1570 he declared that Elizabeth was illegitimate, and had no right to the crown of England. This naturally angered the queen, who was not of a temper to bear such an insult; and this ill-considered action of the Pope's caused the Roman Catholics in England to be very strictly watched, and often subjected to persecution. At the commencement of her reign the queen had shown herself disposed to meet even her personal enemies with great mercy and forbearance. Thus Sir Henry Bedingfield, to whose care she had been consigned in the reign of Mary, and whom she jestingly called *her gaoler*, was pardoned by her. But she was exceedingly jealous of her power; and the Pope took the surest course to increase this jealousy, and arouse her distrust towards her Roman Catholic subjects.

It has often been remarked that Elizabeth was fortunate in having statesmen of great ability to assist her in governing the kingdom. But we must not forget that to the great queen is due the credit of having noticed these men and advanced them to honour. During the reigns of weak and foolish sovereigns, there were doubtless many men in England who might have served the state with honour; but they were neglected and allowed to live in obscurity; while a queen like Elizabeth would treat them as they deserved.

The most famous of her ministers was Cecil, Lord Burleigh, who enjoyed her confidence for many years. He had great faults, but was faithful to his queen to the last; and when, in 1598, he lay dying of a painful disease, his last hours were soothed by the grateful affection of his royal mistress, who waited upon him most lovingly, and fed the poor weak patient with her own hands. Especially anxious was she to advance the power and influence of Britain at sea, fully understanding the value of seamanship to a nation of sailors. Many were the great navigators who in her reign maintained the honour of England on the high seas and in far distant lands. Sir Francis Drake, at once a soldier and a sailor, made a voyage round the world, and fought gallantly against the queen's enemies. He made himself particularly dreaded by the Spaniards,



and once even sailed into the harbour of the city of Cadiz, in Spain, and gave the Dons a beating within sight of their own forts. Sir Walter Raleigh was another great courtier and navigator, whose merits were perceived by the queen, and who was advanced, as he deserved, to places of trust and honour. He sailed to America, and established a colony there, which he called Virginia, in honour of the maiden queen. From thence he brought tobacco to Europe. The plant took its name from Tobago, the place where Raleigh had seen it growing. It is related, that on his return from his voyage, Raleigh was one day solacing himself in his study with a pipe. Smoking was a practice unknown in Europe in those days; and so it happened that a servant of Raleigh's, who chanced to come in with a jug of ale, was horrified at seeing a volume of smoke issuing from his master's mouth, and immediately threw the contents of the jug over Sir Walter to put out the fire. Raleigh was, moreover, a man of learning and a poet. He patronised and brought forward Edmund Spenser, the author of "The Faëry Queen," one of the best poems of that age. Among the other voyagers of that reign, we may mention Sir Martin Frobisher, Sir John Hawkins, and Sir Humphrey Gilbert, the brother-in-law of Raleigh.

The last of these great men perished on his return from a long voyage. He had two ships; and the one in which he was, being evidently in a sinking state, many of his friends asked him to remove to the other; but Gilbert was too generous to choose the safer ship for himself, while many of his poor sailors were obliged to sail in a leaky vessel. He refused to leave them in their peril, and stayed where he was, saying to his men, "We are as near heaven by sea as by land." A great storm arose, and the generous captain perished in his leaky ship, with all on board; but the sailors in the other vessel made their way back to England; and when they told the grand story of the admiral's generosity, all who heard it agreed that his death was a fitting close to his gallant and honourable life; and wherever we read of the sea heroes of England, this tale of Sir Humphrey Gilbert is told as a memorial of a good and faithful man.

But the greatest man in the reign of Elizabeth was Shakespeare, whose poetry surpassed all that the world ever heard, and whose works are still the delight of the whole world. The queen knew and admired him;

## THE HISTORY OF MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS.

and in more than one of his plays, Shakespeare makes an allusion to Elizabeth in lofty and noble terms, that show he valued her character, and understood and appreciated the Virgin Queen.

### CHAPTER VIII.

#### THE REIGN OF QUEEN ELIZABETH CONCLUDED.

Mary, Queen of Scots—Her early life and education in France—Marries the French King—Her arrival in Scotland—Her marriage with Darnley—Rizzio's murder—Death of Darnley—Mary marries Bothwell—Battle of Carberry Hill—Mary's imprisonment in England—Her execution—The Spanish Armada—Popularity of the Queen—Story of Essex—Elizabeth's death.

THE glorious memory of Elizabeth has one great blot upon it. In one instance this queen acted in a manner very foreign to her usual character; and well would it be could the history of Elizabeth be written without mention of the mournful story of Mary, Queen of Scots. For there is no denying that, in her treatment of the unfortunate Scottish queen, Elizabeth acted in utter defiance of right and justice—that the execution of the Queen of Scots was a wicked and cruel action. But as, in relating a history, we should tell of the evil as well as of the good in the reign of each sovereign, the chief events in the history of Mary must here be given.

In speaking of the reign of King Edward VI., it was mentioned that Henry VIII. had intended to marry his son to Mary, the young Scottish queen; but that the Scots, after the battle of Pinkie, sent their queen away into France, where she was married to the young prince, afterwards King Francis II. Mary was descended from Margaret Tudor, sister to Henry VIII., and was considered by the Roman Catholics of England as the real heir to the English throne; for the Romanists affected to think that the marriage of Anne Boleyn, Elizabeth's mother, with Henry VIII., was not a legal one. Mary and the French king her husband

quartered the arms of England with those of France and Scotland on their shields, and thus seemed to claim a right to the English throne.

This excited the anger and distrust of Elizabeth; and when, on the death of the French king, Mary was compelled to return from France to Scotland, and wished to pass through England, she refused to let her enter the country, lest the Romanists should rebel, to set her on the throne.

It was Mary's misfortune that a long residence at the polished French court had rendered Scotland and the Scotch very distasteful to her. She could not help contrasting the bare rugged country and the rude quarrelsome nobles, with the beautiful sunny land and the elegant court she had quitted. Her religion also rendered the Scotch distrustful of her; and her second husband, Henry, Lord Darnley, treated her in an unworthy manner. The queen, partly from a real love of music, and partly perhaps to revenge herself on Darnley, admitted to her favour an Italian musician, David Rizzio, who was allowed to behave with arrogance towards the nobles. These lords were naturally angry at this; and as for Darnley, he was so much enraged, that he formed a plot with Lord Ruthven and others to murder Rizzio in the palace of Holyrood in Edinburgh. The conspirators found the musician sitting in the queen's company in her apartment in the palace. When Rizzio saw the furious faces crowding into the room, he knew that his life was in danger, and fled to the queen for help, piteously begging her to save him. But his enemies were too angry to listen: they dragged him out of the room, and stabbed him to death with their daggers at the foot of the staircase. The queen's horror at this murder soon changed to a deep feeling of hatred towards Darnley, her husband, the cowardly assassin; and to the Earl of Bothwell, a fierce Scottish noble, was transferred the affection she had once felt for the unworthy king.

Shortly afterwards Darnley was found dead in an orchard near Edinburgh. An explosion of gunpowder had taken place in the house in which he dwelt, and an attempt was made to make the people believe that this explosion was the cause of Darnley's death. But the Scottish nobles and commons knew better. No marks of fire were found on Darnley's corpse or on the clothes he wore; and Bothwell was strongly suspected of having killed Darnley, with Mary's connivance. This belief

was strengthened when the queen soon after married Bothwell; and now the nobles formed a league to drive Queen Mary from the throne. She met them with an army at Carberry Hill; but her men would not fight, and Mary was obliged to surrender herself a prisoner. The nobles shut her up in Lochleven Castle; but Mary escaped, and once more tried the chance of battle at Langside. Utterly defeated, and with not a hope left in Scotland, the unhappy queen decided upon appealing to the protection of her cousin Elizabeth, and fled into England. These events happened in the year 1568.

Elizabeth did not receive Mary as a friend, but treated her cousin as a dangerous enemy. The Queen of Scots was shut up in one castle after another till she was removed to Fotheringay, in Northamptonshire, where she spent the rest of her sad life in dreary captivity. The conduct of Elizabeth in this matter was ungenerous and unjust; but in judging her actions we must remember that England 300 years ago was different from the England of to-day. The Protestant religion had not long been established; and many Romanists, priests and laymen, would have been only too glad of an opportunity to restore the old religion and the power of the Pope under a popish monarch. Plots and conspiracies against the government, and even against the life of Elizabeth, were of continual occurrence; and in all these plots the chief object was the placing of Mary upon the English throne. Thus there was a conflict between Elizabeth's duty as a woman and her safety as a queen. It seemed cruel to keep the Scottish queen in prison; but Elizabeth would not have been one day in security while Mary was free. And thus, from the fear of insurrection, and at the earnest desire of the English queen's councillors, Mary was detained a close prisoner.

In 1572 the Duke of Norfolk entered into a conspiracy to set the Queen of Scots free. The design was discovered, and Norfolk suffered death as a traitor. The captive Scottish queen entered into correspondence with Elizabeth's foreign enemies, and thus distrust and fear were kept alive. In 1586 another and still more dangerous plot was discovered. Ballard, a Jesuit priest, and a gentleman named Babington, conspired to kill Queen Elizabeth, and not only to liberate Mary, but proclaim her Queen of England as Elizabeth's successor.

Then at length it was determined that the Scottish queen should die, and on the 8th of February, 1587, she was beheaded at Fotheringay. A scaffold had been erected in the great hall of the castle. The captive appeared surrounded by six of her attendants. She showed no sign of fear, and spoke with a queenly dignity before she laid her weary head on the block. She declared that she forgave all her enemies, and that she had never contrived anything against the person of Elizabeth.

Mary's life had been singularly unhappy, and in her time she had been guilty of great crimes; but the royal fortitude with which she suffered death excited much sympathy for her; and people forgot her faults, and remembered only how beautiful she had been, how queenly, and how unfortunate.

And now England was threatened by a great and tremendous danger. Philip II., King of Spain, the husband of the late Queen Mary of England, was the most powerful prince in Europe. He ruled over vast dominions in Europe and in America. His wealth was immense; his armies were numerous and well disciplined, and his ships covered the seas. And now this mighty monarch determined to conquer England, and restore there the Roman Catholic religion. A great fleet of heavy war-ships was fitted out in Belgium, Holland, and Spain; and in October, 1588, the "Invincible Armada," as it was called, consisting of 136 ships, was seen sailing up the English Channel. But it did not encounter an unprepared enemy. The English came flocking right gallantly to the defence of their queen and country. Elizabeth herself set a grand example. She addressed the troops at Tilbury Fort in a noble speech, declaring that she had full confidence in her loyal subjects; and the people, thus appealed to, tried to prove that her confidence was not misplaced. The City of London provided double the number of ships that had been demanded of it. All round the coast men were on the watch beside great piles of wood on the summits of hills, that the beacon-fires might blaze up to give notice of the enemy's approach directly the Spanish fleet appeared in sight. At last the great armament appeared, sailing slowly up the Channel in the form of a vast crescent or half-moon. And then the brave admiral, Lord Howard, sallied forth with his ships—a small fleet in comparison with that of the enemy—to fight his country's

foes. The Spanish ships were large and unmanageable, and the wind blew fresh. The English had the advantage in the fight, and Howard captured twelve of the enemy's largest vessels. A number of small English merchantmen, hastily armed and equipped, but with right gallant hearts on board, came shooting out of the bays and inlets on the coast, all anxious for a fight with the Spaniards; and the result was, that the Spanish admiral, Medina Sidonia, made the best of his way back to Spain, after losing more than half his fleet; and the "Invincible Armada" was vanquished, and did not conquer England.

When the news of these great events spread throughout Europe, all men felt a great respect for the brave English nation and their heroic queen. The English themselves were naturally elated, and their "Good Queen Bess," who had trusted them and had spoken out so royally in the hour of danger, became a greater favourite than ever. England was now safe from foreign invasion; and the English ships sailed over every sea, increasing the commerce of the realm, and making the English name known and feared as it had never been known and feared until then. Thus the closing years of Elizabeth's reign were years of great glory and prosperity for the country.

In 1598 died the queen's faithful friend and counsellor, Cecil, Lord Burleigh; and Elizabeth's last days were embittered by the rebellion of her young favourite, the Earl of Essex. This Essex was a gallant young nobleman, but hasty and hot tempered. At a council he offended the queen so much by his petulance, that she gave him a box on the ear; for Queen Bess had the temper of a lioness, and would brook disrespect from none. Essex left the council in great anger, but was afterwards pardoned and sent to Ireland. But soon the quarrel burst out again, and at length Essex foolishly strove to excite the Londoners to rebellion. For this he was condemned to death; but the queen would still have pardoned him, had she received from him a certain ring which she once had given to him, with an injunction to send it to her whenever he should be in danger or distress. The ring never came; and, offended at Essex's obstinacy, the queen, with a heavy heart, left him to his fate. But the unhappy earl had been betrayed. He had given the ring to be sent to the queen by the hands of a lady; but the ring, by mistake, fell



DEFEAT OF THE SPANISH ARMADA.

into the hands of a lady whose husband hated Essex, and was not given to the queen at all. Elizabeth heard of this after Essex's death, and the news affected her so much, that she fell into a state of deep melancholy. For days she lay upon the ground, refusing to be comforted; and at length died in her palace of Richmond, after a glorious reign of forty-five years.

Many great men in her time contributed to make England famous and powerful; and it is remembered as a praiseworthy and good point in the queen's character, that, a diligent worker herself, she encouraged and honoured all those who showed themselves ready and willing to work. Among her great statesmen we have the wise Lord Chancellor Bacon and the prudent Burleigh; and among poets, Spenser and Ben Jonson, besides the greatest of all—William Shakespeare, of whom we have already spoken, and whose works have been read and enjoyed by millions during the 250 years that have elapsed since his death.

Elizabeth had great faults, but these were balanced by many queenly virtues. She loved and trusted her people, and worked right royally for them; and they in return, seeing and valuing what was great and queenly in her character, bore with her faults, and forgave her the evil for the sake of the good.



## PART VII. THE STUART KINGS.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### JAMES I.

Contrast in the characters of Elizabeth and James—His notions of the divine right of kings—Disagreements with the Parliament—An instance of the King's absolutism—James's new peers—Plot for placing Arabella Stuart on the throne—Religious matters—The Gunpowder Plot—Henry, Prince of Wales—His character and death—James's favourites—Carr—Buckingham—The Spanish Match—Death of James.

THE nearest relation to Queen Elizabeth, and the one, therefore, who had a right to succeed to the English throne on that great queen's death, was James Stuart, King of Scotland, the son of the unfortunate Mary, who perished at Fotheringay. Accordingly, when Elizabeth had breathed her last, this James VI. of Scotland was proclaimed king, as James I. of England, and at once began his journey southward to take possession of his new kingdom.

The new ruler of England was the very opposite in character and manners to the heroic sovereign whom he succeeded. Elizabeth had concealed, beneath the form of a woman, the courage and firmness of a man; James, on the contrary, often made an exhibition of weakness and physical cowardice that would hardly have been forgiven in a woman. Elizabeth had the sense to choose for her friends and confidants men who were worthy of trust and distinction; James was always surrounded by unworthy favourites, who took advantage of his weakness, and made a tool of him for their own purposes. Unbending and resolute, Elizabeth had depended upon herself; James was always leaning, in a feeble, purposeless way, upon others.

Yet the new king had very high notions of his own power and privi-

leges. He held the doctrine of the divine right of kings; that is to say, he believed and declared that kings receive their commission to rule directly from Heaven, and that they are above the law; and consequently that dutiful subjects have nothing to do but to obey, without question or remonstrance, any command the king chooses to give. Now the English Parliament did not at all agree in these notions of the clumsy, vulgar Scottish king, who claimed such high power and looked so undignified. They civilly told him he was mistaken. They said, "Your Majesty would be misinformed if any man should deliver that the Kings of England have any absolute power in themselves, either to alter religion, or to make any laws concerning the same, otherwise than as in temporal causes, by consent of Parliament. We have, and shall at all times, by our oaths acknowledge that your Majesty is sovereign lord and supreme governor in both."

Thus, from the very beginning of the Stuart dynasty in England, there was a matter of quarrel between the king and the people. The king wanted to rule alone, and thought the Parliament was only called together to give him assistance and advice. The Parliament claimed to have a part of the power, and declared that the king could not rule except *together with the Lords and Commons*; and that the king was as much bound as any of his subjects to observe the laws.

During his progress from Scotland to London, James had given his subjects an example of what they might expect from him, by a deed of injustice. At York a man was caught stealing a purse, and the new king caused him to be hanged immediately, without a trial; though, according to English law, every man accused of a crime has a right to be tried by his peers, or equals. James, moreover, gave away estates and manors in abundance to the Scottish lords who surrounded him; and so many were raised to the rank of nobles, that the people laughed, and vowed that it was difficult to remember who was a noble and who was not.

The king's conduct excited very serious discontent; and a conspiracy was formed to place the Lady Arabella Stuart, a relative of James, on the throne. The plot failed, and Sir Walter Raleigh, the brave soldier, accomplished statesman, and great navigator, was put into prison in the Tower for being concerned in it.



GUY FAWKES BEFORE JAMES I.

In Church matters there was much dissention and discontent. Three great communities were at that time established in England—the Roman Catholics, the Puritans, and the Church of England. James favoured the Church of England party, because the bishops seemed inclined to agree with his notions of kingly power. He behaved with great harshness towards the unoffending Puritans, and so excited the wrath of the Romanists, that a few misguided men of that persuasion determined to rid themselves at one great blow of the king and the Parliament together.

This conspiracy is known in history by the name of the Gunpowder Plot. The chief actors in it were three Catholic gentlemen named Catesby, Winter, and Fawkes. They hid a number of barrels of gunpowder in a cellar under the Parliament House, in which the King, Lords, and Commons were to assemble on the 5th of November, 1605; and their design was to set fire to this gunpowder, and thus to blow the whole assembly at once into the air. But one of the conspirators wrote a letter to a friend, warning this friend, Lord Monteagle, to keep away from the Parliament. This letter was carried to the king in council; and when a search was made in the vaults under the Parliament House, not only were the barrels of gunpowder discovered, but Guy Fawkes, one of the conspirators, also. Fawkes was captured and hanged; and after a time the other chiefs in the plot were executed or shot down. The only effect of this wicked conspiracy was to render the king more harsh than ever.

King James was not the man to gain the affections of his subjects, and if his deeds had corresponded with his words, there might soon have been a general revolt in England. But his talk was much fiercer than his actions. He was so cowardly that he could not bear the sight of a drawn sword. He wore a coat stuffed and padded so thickly that a dagger-thrust could not pierce through it; and was much more fond of eating and drinking, especially the latter, than of asserting his "right divine" in any way except in loud blustering words. Thus, though the Parliament continually quarrelled with him, and there was much discontent throughout the land, the people generally despised James too much to commence active measures against him; and thus the first Stuart king reigned for more than twenty years in England, amid plenty of quarrelling, but without any positive war.

The king's eldest son, Henry, Prince of Wales, promised to become a wise and gallant king. He saw the follies of his father, and avoided them; and there is no doubt that James perceived how much more respect the people had for Henry than for himself, and consequently he was not a little jealous of his gifted son. To the great regret of the majority of the people, this amiable young prince died in 1612, and his brother Charles became Prince of Wales, and next heir to the crown. James's daughter Elizabeth was married to the Elector Palatine, a German prince; and from her the present royal family of England are descended. This Elector Palatine was made King of Bohemia for a short time; but he was very unfortunate, and though James promised to assist him in his troubles, he did very little for him, or indeed for any one else.

In reading history we can scarcely fail to observe that a wise king always chooses good associates, while a foolish king is surrounded by bad advisers. James was no exception to this rule. Unworthy favourites carried off the honours and rewards that should have been bestowed upon merit and worth, and their bad counsel confirmed the king in his follies, and increased the contempt and dislike with which his subjects regarded him; while the really great men whom Queen Elizabeth had delighted to honour received neither encouragement nor protection at his hands. Thus the great Sir Walter Raleigh was kept for many years a prisoner in a little cell in the Tower of London; and this act of injustice induced Prince Henry to declare that no man but his father would keep such a bird in a cage. At last Raleigh was set at liberty, and allowed to depart on an expedition to Guiana, in South America. But he was unfortunate in this undertaking, and returned to England without bringing the wealth he had hoped to gain; whereupon the contemptible king caused him to be beheaded, in pursuance of an unjust sentence passed upon him many years before. Raleigh died bravely; and his death caused much indignation among those who had known him as a great and distinguished man. During his long imprisonment in the Tower, he had written a valuable work called the "History of the World."

Among the unworthy favourites of James was a Scottish youth named Carr, whom the king created Earl of Somerset. This Carr and the wicked Countess of Essex, whom he afterwards married, poisoned a gen-

tleman named Sir Thomas Overbury, in the Tower of London. For this they were both condemned to death; but the weak king pardoned them, and allowed them to retire to an estate in the country, where they lived in obscurity, hating each other, and tormented by the remembrance of their evil deeds.

After Carr had thus fallen into disgrace, his place as favourite was filled by another young, handsome, and haughty courtier, George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham. Besides being the chosen ally of James, this Villiers was the confidant and friend of the young Prince Charles, over whom he gained a great influence. It had long been the chief wish of the king to marry the Prince of Wales to the daughter of the King of Spain. Villiers and Prince Charles travelled in disguise to the Spanish court, and the project was in a fair way of being accomplished—for the princess was willing to marry Charles, and the Spanish Government looked with favour on the alliance—when Buckingham, by his haughty behaviour, offended the Spanish Prime Minister, and the whole scheme fell to the ground. The prince, shortly after his father's death, married the Princess Henrietta Maria of France.

During the latter years of James's reign the quarrels between king and Parliament became more and more frequent. The Parliament tried to bring the king to reason by refusing to supply him with money until the grievances of the nation were redressed; and the king endeavoured to frighten the Parliament by threatening to dispense with its services altogether, and to rule the country alone. At one period of his reign three years elapsed during which no Parliament was summoned.

In this reign Shakespeare wrote many of his best works. He died in his native town of Stratford-upon-Avon in 1616. Lord Chancellor Bacon, one of the wisest of men, also wrote several valuable books; but the greatest and most important literary work of James's time was the translation, by many learned men, of the Bible, into the form now used in every Protestant household throughout the British empire.

King James I. died, in 1625, of a disease called a tertian ague. He was about sixty years old, and had reigned twenty-two years in England. He was the first monarch who governed the two countries, England and Scotland.



MURDER OF THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

## CHAPTER II.

### CHARLES I.

Handsome appearance of Charles—His taste in art and literature—His marriage with Henrietta Maria a cause of offence to his subjects—Public hatred to Buckingham—Dissolution of Parliament—The siege of Rochelle—The Petition of Right—Assassination of Buckingham—Charles reigns for eleven years without a Parliament—Lord Strafford—Ship-money—Hampden—The Puritans—The Covenant—The Long Parliament—The Civil War.

CHARLES, the second son of James I., came to the throne at his father's death. He was now twenty-five years of age; handsome and dignified in appearance, grave and courteous in manner. His mind was of a high order. He had a real taste for art and literature, and as a father and husband behaved in a blameless way; but as a king he was very unfortunate. The ideas of the divine right of kings, in which he had been educated, made him think that he had only to command, and that the people had no right to refuse obedience, whether he ruled according to law or in defiance of it. The counsellors who enjoyed his confidence did not teach him in the right way; and the people whom he was called upon to govern were irritated by the senseless conduct of James, and frequently showed themselves unruly and distrustful. Thus the reign of Charles was turbulent from its very commencement, and closed at last in rebellion and misery.

The king's marriage was the first step that decreased his popularity and filled many of his best subjects with mistrust. His queen, Henrietta Maria of France, was a Roman Catholic; and the remembrance of the persecution to which the Protestants in France had often been subjected was vivid enough, in England, to cause a queen of the French nation and of the Catholic religion to be looked upon with dislike and suspicion. Another injudicious measure was the king's persistence in retaining the haughty and arrogant Buckingham as his chief adviser and friend. All classes hated the king's favourite, who seemed intoxicated with pride and presumption; but the House of Commons was especially his enemy; and



soon a bill containing various charges was preferred against him. Charles immediately dissolved the Parliament, and lavished greater proofs of affection than ever on his favourite.

At this time the Protestants in France were fighting valiantly against the French minister Richelieu, who had besieged them in their last stronghold, the coast town of Rochelle. Charles sent a number of English troops to help the Protestants, and gave the command of the expedition to Buckingham, who mismanaged the whole matter, and was obliged to return to England after losing a great many men and effecting nothing. But still Charles believed in Buckingham as much as ever. He had, moreover, displeased his subjects by levying tonnage and poundage, that is, taxes upon all goods brought into England or carried out thence. This measure was quite against the law, which decided that taxes could not be imposed without the consent of Parliament.

In 1628 the Parliament drew up a celebrated petition, called the PETITION OF RIGHT. This was a writing in which the Commons protested against the illegal actions of the king, complaining of his method of raising money by tonnage and poundage, and various others among his measures, as being against the law and subversive of the liberty of Englishmen. Charles at last consented to sign this petition; and for a time it seemed as if discontent would cease.

But the unlucky Buckingham still maintained his power over the king; and Charles would not hear a word of complaint against this favourite who ruled him. Another expedition for the help of the French Protestants was prepared, and again the command was entrusted to Buckingham, who was, however, slain by a madman named Felton, just as he was about to embark at Portsmouth.

In the next year the king, finding the Parliament would not give way to him, decided that he would govern England alone. And now, for eleven years, no Parliament was summoned. The king ruled the nation with the help of two advisers, Archbishop Laud and Sir Thomas Wentworth; the latter obtained the title of Lord Strafford.

In times of danger the kings had sometimes called upon their subjects for assistance, to put the kingdom in a state of defence, and to provide men, and arms, and ships, wherewith to encounter an enemy. Charles

remembered this; and now that no Parliament existed to oppose his will, he raised ship-money, and tonnage and poundage, though the nation was at peace; and whereas ship-money had in former times been levied only upon the seaport towns, he made it into a regular tax, to be collected throughout the length and breadth of the kingdom.

At last a gentleman of Buckinghamshire, John Hampden, determined to resist what he considered an unjust and illegal demand. He refused to pay ship-money; and the question was now to be tried in a court of law. The judges, who to a certain extent depended upon Charles's favour, decided against Hampden, and declared that the king was not bound by law. The Puritans were also terribly persecuted, and those of them who spoke or wrote a word against the king's injustice were cruelly punished. Some were barbarously flogged, and the ears of others were cut off. To such a height did persecution at last rise against them, that many left the country, and sailed away to America, where they founded the colony of New England. In many respects also the Church party, who held with the king, imitated the ceremonies and preached the doctrines of the Romish Church in a manner which gave great offence to the people. A deep murmur of anger and discontent went all through England; but the people still bore the tyranny of the Government without active resistance, for the English are slow to rise in rebellion against their rulers.

Unhappily for themselves, the king and his advisers mistook this silence for submission; and, at this dangerous time, proceeded to offend the Scotch, who had a separate Protestant worship of their own, by seeking to compel them to adopt the services of the Church of England. But the Scotch were less patient than the English. When an attempt was made to read the English service in the High Church of Edinburgh, a host of people assembled, and began to throw stones and cudgels at the clergyman's head; and the leaders of the Presbyterian or Scottish National Church gathered themselves together, and signed a declaration, which they called the *Solemn League and Covenant*, by which they bound themselves to defend their freedom of worship to the last extremity.

The year 1640 saw Scotland in open revolt. A Scottish army, under General Leslie, crossed the Tweed, and invaded the northern counties.



DEPARTURE OF THE PILGRIM FATHERS.

The king had not an army strong enough to resist the rebels. Things could endure no longer in the state in which they then were; and at last, on the 3rd of November, 1640, sorely against his inclination, Charles was obliged once more to summon a Parliament in England, and thus to acknowledge that his scheme of absolute rule over England had miserably failed.

This was the most celebrated Parliament ever summoned in the course of English history; and from the length of time during which it sat, it is known by the name of the Long Parliament. The patriot Hampden and other zealous men, among whom were Pym, Holles, and Sir Henry Vane, were at the head of the popular party; and they clamoured for punishment on Strafford and Laud, whose bad counsel they declared had caused the king to commit many acts of injustice, and brought disgrace and calamity upon the kingdoms of England and Scotland. Both Laud and Strafford were imprisoned, and, after a few months, the latter was publicly executed as a traitor. He died bravely, protesting that he had always loved his king and country. Charles felt the death of his counsellor most bitterly, and made great efforts to save him, but the Commons were too angry to show mercy. For a time it appeared that the king and Parliament were reconciled, but soon the quarrel recommenced. The Parliament determined that the king must make new concessions; and, in 1642, Charles, thinking to strike terror into his opponents by a display of vigour, came down to the Parliament House at Westminster, attended by an armed guard, with the intention of arresting Pym, Hampden, and three other popular leaders, on a charge of treason. The members had received notice of their danger, and had quitted the house before the king arrived; but the assembly was highly indignant at this unlawful proceeding. The people began openly to defy Charles's authority; and at length it became evident that there could be no confidence between the king and his Parliament, and that nothing less than a war could decide the quarrel between them. Thus it was that Charles quitted London, and raised the royal standard at Nottingham.



## CHAPTER III.

### THE REIGN OF CHARLES I. CONTINUED—THE CIVIL WAR.

Cavaliers and Roundheads—Oliver Cromwell—He reconstructs the Parliamentary army—Peculiar names of the Roundhead soldiers—Cromwell's Ironsides—Battles of Edgehill and Brentford—Death of Hampden—Battle of Newbury—Battle of Marston Moor—Execution of Laud—Naseby—Charles throws himself upon the protection of the Scotch—Power of the army—Trial and execution of Charles.

THUS England was divided into two great factions, one following the Parliament, the other holding with the king; and a civil war began, in which great battles were fought and many brave men slain. The king's friends consisted chiefly of the nobility and gentry, and their servants and tenantry: the Parliament relied chiefly upon the mercantile and citizen classes, and recruited its army from the great towns. The partisans of the king called themselves Cavaliers, or gentlemen, and wore their hair hanging in long flowing locks over their shoulders; and, in derision, they gave the name of Roundheads to their opponents, whose hair was closely cropped. Great sacrifices were made by the Cavaliers to furnish the king with money to carry on the contest. Many of them melted down their gold and silver plate into rough coin, and all supported their king right nobly; but the Parliament taxed the people, and thus procured ampler supplies more easily and readily.

At first the king had the best of the contest. The gamekeepers and yeomen who followed his nobles to the field knew how to ride a horse, and had practised manly exercises, and therefore made good soldiers; while the Parliamentary army consisted chiefly of servants out of employment and idle fellows picked up in the streets of the great towns. But as the nobles and gentry became poorer, and the king's supplies began to fail, the advantage turned to the other side. While the king's friends were straitened for want of money, the leaders of the Parliamentary party could obtain fresh supplies year after year by taxation; and without money war cannot be carried on.

A great change for the better was made in the Parliamentary army by the exertions of a very remarkable man, whose name soon began to be known and feared from one end of the kingdom to the other. This man was Oliver Cromwell. He had sat in the Long Parliament, and had ardently taken up the cause of the people; and he now saw that if the Parliament was to be victorious, it must enlist an army of much better men than the worn-out tapsters, who were unable to emulate the loyal, brave followers of Charles, or to stand against the fiery charges of the gallant Prince Rupert, who commanded the king's cavalry. Accordingly he set about enlisting a number of men, who fought not for pay or worldly advantage, but from a feeling of religion and a hatred to tyranny. They were stern and fanatical, these troopers of Cromwell's, and their harsh gloomy religion had in it very little of the mild gentle spirit of Christianity; but they were terribly in earnest, and honestly devoted themselves to the cause they took up. Some of them took names derived from the Bible or from religious texts, such as "Hew-them-in-pieces-before-the-Lord," "Fear-the-Lord," and "Love-grace." They were fond of preaching to each other, and often a captain or corporal would deliver a long address to his men as they sat or stood around the camp fire. The Cavaliers affected to despise them, and spoke of them with contempt as a set of psalm-singing snuffing hypocrites; but in the field they fought like lions, believing themselves engaged in a righteous cause; and, be their faults what they might, the majority of them truly feared the Lord, and believed that through His means they should conquer. Conspicuous among them all for bravery and discipline were a thousand men whom Cromwell formed into a body, which he himself headed: these formidable horsemen were looked upon as unconquerable, and obtained the name of *Oliver's Ironsides*.

No fewer than ten battles were fought in this great civil war. At Edgehill (23rd of October, 1642) and at Brentford (12th of November, 1642) the Royalists had the advantage. On the 19th of June, 1643, there was a skirmish, or slight combat of cavalry, at Chalgrave Field, in Oxfordshire. Here the patriot Hampden was wounded, and rode slowly away from the field to die. On the 25th of July, in the same year, another battle was fought at Lansdowne, near Bath.

In 1643, at the battle of Newbury, Lord Essex, the leader of the Parliamentary troops, showed great gallantry; and from this time victory turned to the side of the people.

A great defeat was suffered by Charles in the battle of Marston Moor, in Yorkshire, on the 2nd of July, 1644. By this time the Scottish army had joined the Parliamentary troops; and in spite of the bravery of the gallant Prince Rupert, perhaps, indeed, in consequence of his rashness, the king's army was utterly routed, and the northern counties were lost to him.

The old Archbishop Laud had lain for a long time in prison. In 1645 he was executed for high treason. He had been weak and foolish in many respects, but was far from being a bad man. In those troublous times his fate excited little attention.

Naseby fight in Northamptonshire, on the 14th of June, 1645, was utterly fatal to the king's cause. Charles's army was almost destroyed, and his baggage and artillery, and, what was of more consequence still, his private papers, fell into the hands of the victors. Bristol was soon after taken; and the king, after wandering about for some time, threw himself upon the protection of the Scottish army at Newark, in Nottinghamshire, by whom he expected to be well received. To his great chagrin, however, he found himself kept in a kind of captivity; and not long afterwards the Scots gave him up to the Parliament, in consideration of a large sum of money which was paid to them.

In this war everything depended in the first instance upon the army; and thus the army became more powerful than the Parliament. In the hands of the leaders of the army, he was transferred from one prison to another; and during this period of his misfortunes, he showed such a meek and gentle spirit, so much resignation, and so much dignity, that many who had been angry with him during the time of his prosperity now pitied him sincerely, and would have been only too glad to see him once more on the throne amid a free people; but the fear of the victorious and fanatical army, which was now all-powerful in England, kept them silent.

Some attempts made in 1648, by the friends of Charles, to set the unhappy monarch free, and to regain for him the position he had lost,





CHARLES I. A PRISONER IN CARISBROOK CASTLE.

## TRIAL AND EXECUTION OF THE KING.

ended in failure; but they furnished a pretext to the captive monarch's enemies for declaring that, so long as Charles Stuart lived, there would be no peace in the land.

Therefore, Oliver Cromwell and some other leaders of the Roundheads determined that the King of England should be brought to trial openly, as a traitor to the country. This trial is one of the darkest and saddest pages in our English history. It was well known that, ever since the utter failure of the king's cause, men's hearts had, in secret, been turning towards the captive monarch, and that a great many members of the House of Commons would never consent to his death. Therefore a certain Colonel Pride was ordered to station himself with some armed men at the door of the House of Commons, and all those members who were known to be friendly to the king were forbidden to enter. The few members who were left in the House could be trusted to do exactly what the leaders of the army bade. They passed an act accusing the king of treason, and on the 20th of January, 1649, he was brought to trial before a court consisting chiefly of officers.

His death had been determined upon before the so-called trial began. He was found guilty as a matter of course, and exposed to insults and upbraidings, which he bore with a beautiful calmness and constancy. As the trial proceeded, the real feelings of the people became more and more apparent; many voices in the crowd fervently cried, "God save the king!"—and it was evident that the heart of the English people was returning to its king in the day of his downfall and misery.

Only sixty-seven members out of the 134 summoned to the court were present when the king's condemnation was pronounced. Fifty-nine of them, among whom was Cromwell, signed the death warrant. On the 30th of January Charles suffered death on a scaffold in front of his own palace of Whitehall. His behaviour was firm, and yet gentle. He seemed glad to have done with all his troubles, and remarked, a few minutes before receiving the stroke of the headsman's axe, "I go from a corruptible to an incorruptible crown, where no disturbance can be." When his royal head, grey with the cares of many troubled years, fell on the scaffold, a deep groan of horror and compassion arose from the thousands of spectators who thronged round the scaffold. In many a



EXECUTION OF CHARLES I.

sturdy English heart, the remembrance of the dead man's many faults passed away, and nothing was left but sorrow at the thought of the mighty grief that had bowed that royal head to the dust, and admiration at the gentle patience of the monarch who died so well, bearing his burden to the last with the quiet fortitude of a brave man, and forgiving his enemies with the noble spirit of a Christian gentleman.

## CHAPTER IV.

### OLIVER CROMWELL'S RULE IN ENGLAND.

Anarchy in England after Charles's death—Religious dissensions—Charles II. acknowledged in Scotland—Cromwell's vigorous measures in Ireland—Invasion of Scotland by Cromwell—Dunbar—Worcester—Flight of Charles II.—Dissolution of the Long Parliament.

Now that the king was dead, the realm of Great Britain and Ireland was to be governed by the Parliament; but the Parliament itself now consisted only of a small remnant of the members, the House of Lords having been abolished as dangerous and useless. This remnant of the Parliament was entirely governed by the army, and the principal man in the army was Oliver Cromwell. Thus it was easily seen with whom the chief power in England would at length rest.

Indeed, it may be questioned if there was a man in England, except the fearless and astute general of the Ironsides, who could have preserved order among the various factions. In the Church no rule remained: every sect cried aloud that its own was the sole true doctrine—Baptists, Independents, Muggletonians, Brownists, Millenarians, Fifth-Monarchy-men, and plenty of other sects, were belabouring each other with hard words as stoutly as ever Cavaliers and Roundheads had fought with swords. In the north the Presbyterian Scotch looked with dismay on the growing power of a few chiefs in the English army; and, fearful of military tyranny, proclaimed the Prince of Wales king by the title of



CHARLES II. IN THE OAK.

Charles II. ; and among the majority of the people, who had suffered so much during the long and cruel strife, the one cry was for *Peace*. In such a state of things, that man would be sure to gain the chief power who had the wisest head to plan measures for the general safety, and the strongest hand to keep down rebellion and to conquer resistance ; and thus the eyes of the nation turned towards Oliver Cromwell.

In England, the hopes of the Royalists had, for the time, been extinguished by the terrible scene enacted in front of Whitehall ; but in Scotland and Ireland the adherents of the monarchy were still strong and enterprising ; and therefore Cromwell was looked upon as the only man who could preserve the Republican form of government now proclaimed in England.

He was made Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and started from London with a formidable army to crush the Royalists in that island. The city of Drogheda had declared for the new king, and a brave old Cavalier, Sir Arthur Aston, was determined to defend the place to the last. Cromwell laid siege to the city ; and considering, perhaps, that the sooner he quelled the rebellion, the better it would be in the end for all, he showed no mercy when Drogheda was taken. His troops massacred all whom they found in the streets : not even women and children were spared ; and the horrible scenes enacted in the unhappy city spread terror and dismay throughout the whole of Ireland. At Wexford, which also held out against the Parliament, similar cruelties were perpetrated. But it is only fair towards Cromwell to state, that he offered safety and liberty of conscience to all who submitted ; and, terrified by the fate of Drogheda and Wexford, nearly all the remaining towns of Ireland accepted the terms he proposed.

Until 1650 General Fairfax had been Commander-in-chief of the troops of the Parliament ; but in that year Prince Charles, or, as he may now be called, King Charles II., landed in Scotland, and was received and acknowledged by the Presbyterians. Thereupon the Parliament determined to invade Scotland, and Fairfax, who was opposed to this measure, resigned the command, which was bestowed upon Cromwell ; and this undaunted general prepared to crush rebellion out of Scotland as he had destroyed it in Ireland.

At Dunbar, on the sea-coast of Scotland, a few miles from Edinburgh, Cromwell encountered the Scottish army, under General Leslie, on the 3rd of September, 1650. When the Scottish troops descended into the plain from their strong position on the hill, Cromwell at once saw the military error they had committed. "The Lord hath delivered them into my hands!" he exclaimed; and inflicted on them such a crushing defeat that the power of Scotland was broken at one blow. He pursued his march northwards, successful everywhere, with troops who believed more and more that they were invincible; and at last Charles, finding matters hopeless in the north, determined to try his fortune once more in England. On New Year's Day, 1651, he was crowned at Scone, and soon afterwards marched southward into England. On the 3rd of September, just one year after the battle of Dunbar, was fought the battle of Worcester, the last in the great civil war; and here Cromwell cut the army of the king to pieces. Charles himself escaped, and the Parliament offered a thousand pounds for his capture. The king, however, after hiding in an oak tree, found some friends in a family named Penderell, living near Worcester. There were several brothers, and they concealed him and managed matters so cleverly, that he was at last able to make his way to Brighthelmstone, now the flourishing town of Brighton, but then a fishing village on the south coast. From this place he found means to escape across the channel into France.

Cromwell's triumph was now complete. In England, Scotland, and Ireland he had vanquished the enemies of the Parliament; and on his return to London he was received with every possible honour.

Two years afterwards, the Long Parliament, which had sat since 1640, was evidently drawing to its close. It had become unpopular: the best men had been removed by various causes, and the members themselves saw that their tenure of power was nearly at an end. Cromwell hastened the dissolution, by appearing one day with a number of soldiers at Westminster. He posted his guards at the various doors, and entering the House when the members were assembled, began to upbraid them in no measured terms. He accused them of dishonesty and self-seeking; told them they had no heart for the public good, and that the Lord had done with them, and had chosen worthier instruments wherewith to work His

will. Then he called in the soldiers, and turned the Parliament out, ordering a soldier to carry away the mace, and himself locking the doors and putting the keys in his pocket before he went away. Thus ended the renowned Long Parliament, after an existence of thirteen years.

There was now no power in England that could stand against Cromwell, for he was backed by the soldiers, who were devoted to him, heart and soul. He was now named Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and had unlimited authority: no king had ruled with such despotic sway as that which the Protector exercised over the realm.

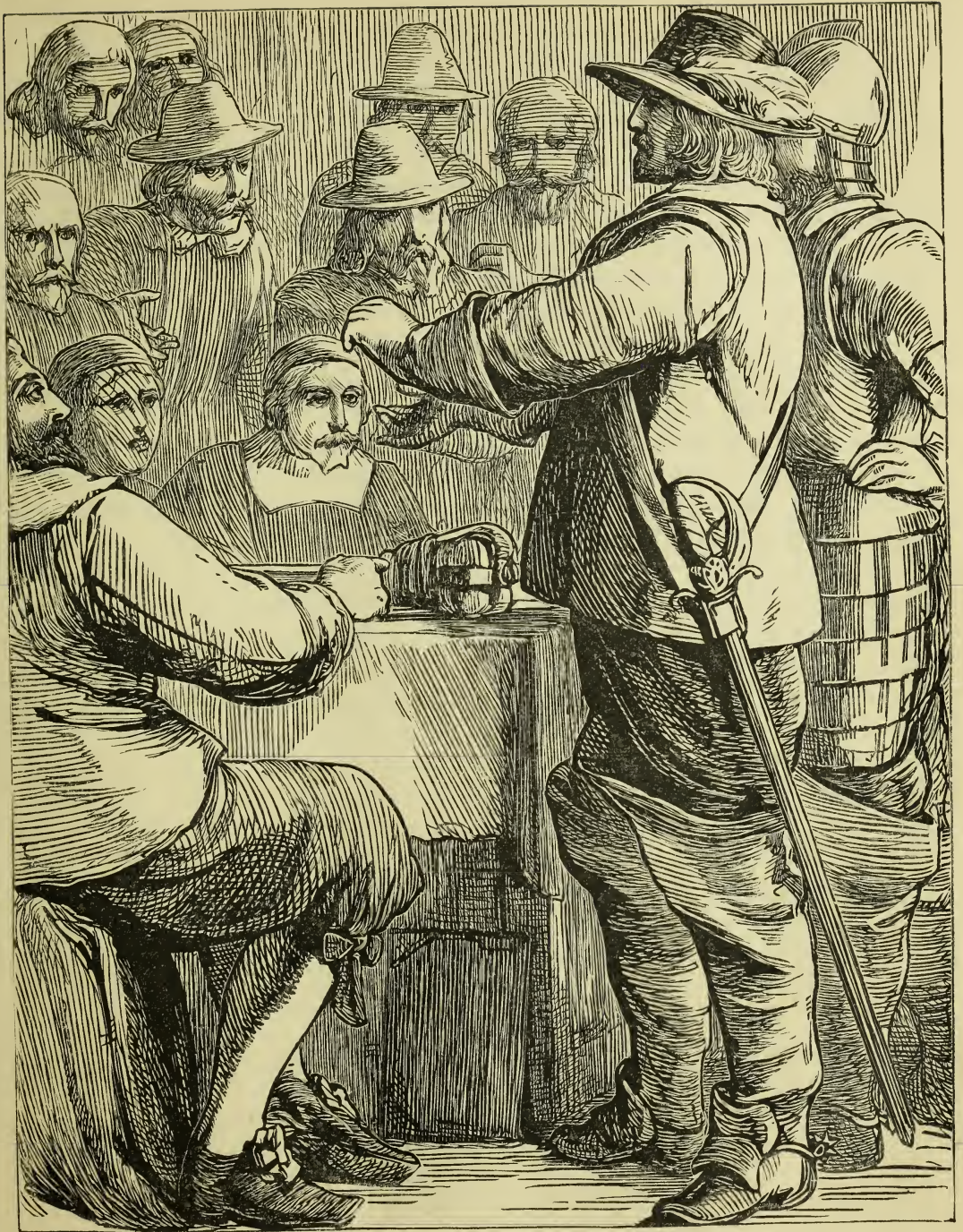
## CHAPTER V.

### THE PROTECTORATE.

Prosperity and glory of England under Cromwell—He protects the persecuted Protestants—The Algerine pirates chastised—Plots against Cromwell's life—"Killing no Murder"—The Protector's death—Richard Cromwell, his successor—Factions—Monk declares for the King—The Restoration.

WHAT had become of those liberties, in defence of which so large a portion of the English people had risen against their king? The iron hand of Cromwell now lay upon all alike; and though many lamented that the country should thus be powerless against the will of one man, none could deny the consummate skill and prudence with which the Dictator guided the State. Never had so strict an obedience to the law been enforced in England as was now exacted under Cromwell's vigorous government; never had Britain been feared and respected abroad as she now was throughout all Europe, and even to the shores of the Mediterranean. Wherever oppressed Protestantism cried out for help, the Lord Protector was ready to respond with an army and a fleet for its protection; wherever the English flag was insulted at sea, or an Englishman subjected to injustice or ignominy, the great ruler of England sent promptly and sternly to demand that justice should be done—and done





CROMWELL DISSOLVING THE LONG PARLIAMENT.

speedily. In the valleys of Piedmont, on the frontiers of far-off Italy, dwelt the Waldenses, a reformed community, who had long suffered cruel persecution at the hands of the Roman Catholic Duke of Savoy. Suddenly a British fleet, dispatched by Cromwell, sailed into the Mediterranean, and the duke was made to understand that the persecution must cease forthwith, for that the Waldenses were to be considered under the protection of England. On the north coast of Africa, where the proud empire of Carthage had stood thousands of years before, dwelt nations of Mahomedan pirates, who captured the crew of many an European vessel, and held thousands of Christian captives in a state of hopeless slavery. The States of Southern Europe were unable to cope with these marauders, and even paid tribute to them to purchase safety; but Cromwell sent a fleet, under the great Admiral Blake, who had already vanquished the best commanders of Holland and defied the power of Spain and Portugal. The Dey of Algiers, one of the chiefs of these robber princes, was obliged to make a prompt submission; and at Tunis, the second of these robber nests, Blake made the ruler understand the principles of justice by speaking to him through the cannon of his ships. The Christian captives were given up, and Blake sailed triumphantly home. The captain of a small English merchantman was plundered by some French sailors: Cromwell immediately caused a French ship to be taken and detained until the French Government made full restitution. The houses of foreign ambassadors were at that time considered as sanctuaries into which no officers of the law might penetrate. But when the brother of the King of Portugal's ambassador killed an Englishman in a cowardly manner, and then fled to the embassy for protection, Cromwell had him seized in the very hall of the ambassador, and caused him to be tried for the murder, and hanged at Tyburn like any common miscreant. Swift and sharp was the justice of the Lord Protector, and ready to descend alike upon the rich and the poor offender.

Thus a few years passed—years of prosperity and glory for Britain, but of sore vexation and disquietude for the extraordinary man who sat on the throne of her kings. The people remained quiet, and the soldiers still seemed devoted to him; but Cromwell knew that in secret the majority of the English were longing for the return of the exiled king,

and that only fear on the one hand, and pride in his warlike successes on the other, kept them from rising against his authority. He knew also that many of the officers in the army were dissatisfied, and that an outbreak might at any time be expected. Even his own family were secretly inclined to favour the Royalist party; and his favourite daughter, Mrs. Claypole, openly told him that the execution of Charles I. had been a crime. So he went on, bearing the splendid burden of his great position, flattered and caressed by foreign ambassadors and princes, treated with every mark of respect by all who approached him, but devoured by secret anxiety and suspicion.

At the beginning of the year 1657 a plot against his life was discovered. A man named Syndercombe, it is said, designed, with the help of some confederates, to shoot at the Protector on the Hammersmith road. The design was betrayed, and Syndercombe was tried and condemned to death, though he persisted in denying his guilt. Soon afterwards a short book appeared with the ominous title, "Killing no Murder." Its author attempted to show that Cromwell was a murderer and an enemy to the State, and that, therefore, to kill him would be no murder, but a good and meritorious action. When the Protector read this book and understood its meaning, he became more gloomy and dejected than ever. He suspected all around him, wore armour under his clothes, had the guards of the palace changed every night, and never slept two nights in succession in the same bed; and, under the weight of a government of which the sole burden lay upon his shoulders, the great Protector gradually broke down. His favourite daughter died, and from the shock of grief at her death he never quite recovered. In August, 1658, it became evident that his strength was failing, and that this great prince would soon have to answer to the King of kings for his deeds on earth. He met his fate with calm fortitude. He declared that what he had done had been from a desire for the good of England, and from a conviction that he was raised up by Heaven to accomplish a certain work. His last hours were devoted to prayer; and he told those around his bed that it was his desire to make what haste he could to be gone. A great storm howled around the palace of Whitehall as the spirit of the mighty Protector passed away.

He died on the 3rd of September, 1658, on the anniversary of his two great victories of Dunbar and Worcester.

The genius and vigour of Oliver Cromwell had been the great support of the Government, of which he had been the real head long before he assumed the title of Protector. The fear of him had kept the various parties in check for years; but now that that fear was withdrawn, and it became known that the mighty hand which had swayed the destinies of England lay cold in death, the different factions soon burst forth; and above all the quarrelling and wrangling of the opposing parties could be distinctly heard the general voice of the people, calling for the return of the exiled king.

The great Protector left two sons, Richard and Henry. Richard, the elder brother, was made Protector at his father's death; but it soon became manifest that he had not the vigour and energy of Oliver, and a rival rose up against him in the person of General Fleetwood, an active commander; and when the Parliament met, which was summoned soon after Oliver's death, fierce quarrels broke out,—the more violent party wishing that only the House of Commons, and not the House of Lords, should be re-established, and refusing, moreover, to pay obedience to Richard Cromwell.

The storm of faction was too violent to be defied by the new Protector. Richard Cromwell therefore laid down his power, and retired to the continent, leaving the factions to fight out their quarrel as best they might.

A Council of State was summoned to deliberate on the measures to be adopted; and while the voices of the various factions were raised high in quarrel, the future of England was decided by the energetic action of one man. This man was General Monk.

George Monk was one of the lieutenants of Cromwell. He had long held command in Scotland, and was highly esteemed by the great Protector. He did his duty as a soldier with firmness and courage, and rendered himself respected by his good sense and justice; but he was so cautious that no one knew whether his real feelings inclined him towards the Royalists or towards the Republicans. While affairs were in a confused and unsettled state in London, he suddenly began to march from



R CHARLES II. RECEIVED BY GENERAL MONK AT DOVER.

Scotland with his army; and, on reaching the capital, was warmly received by the inhabitants, to whom he promised a free Parliament. Then a letter was produced from the exiled king, in which Charles promised to overlook past offences, and to make whatever reforms the Parliament should deem desirable. The Parliament then decided that Charles should be invited over to England, and restored to the throne. A large sum of money was sent to him in Flanders, which was very acceptable, for the exiled monarch and his courtiers had been very poor for a long time. Monk marched southward to Dover, where he met the king on the 20th of May; and on the 29th of May, 1660, Charles entered the city of London amidst the joyous shouts of the inhabitants, who were rejoiced to be delivered from the tyranny of the army, and fully believed the promises of the king.

Thus was the monarchy of England restored after an interval of eleven years, during which, for the only time in the lapse of centuries, military power had held sway. Long after the new king and his younger brother, and the nephew and niece who succeeded that brother, were dead—when half a hundred years had elapsed since the events of which we are now speaking, a quiet white-headed country gentleman came up to London respecting a lawsuit that was to be tried in the Guildhall. The judge before whom the case was to be decided treated him with unusual respect; and the spectators whispered to each other and looked keenly at him as entered the court: and with reason, for this quiet white-headed gentleman was the great Protector's son, Richard Cromwell, who, in a quiet life of usefulness on his farm at Cheshunt, had found more real happiness than his famous father had ever enjoyed upon the throne of England.

## PART VIII. THE RESTORED STUARTS.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### CHARLES II.

Delight of the people at the restoration of Charles—Loyalty of the Parliament—Indolence of the King—The Act of Indemnity—Lord Chancellor Hyde—Catherine of Braganza—The Plague of London—The great Fire.

THE new king, who was received with acclamation by his people, had every prospect of a happy and prosperous reign; and a very small amount of prudence and honesty would have enabled him to retain the good-will extended to him by all classes at his accession. The nation was utterly weary of military tyranny. During the Puritan rule, even innocent mirth and amusement had been prohibited, and young and old had been expected to wear sad-coloured garments and sad faces; and now that the restraint was suddenly taken off, mirth and jollity reigned everywhere. The songs in praise of the Stuarts, and in dispraise of the Roundheads, which the Cavaliers had been fain to sing in corners during the period of the great Protector's rule, were now shouted in public. "The king shall enjoy his own again," "Here's a health unto his Majesty," and similar loyal ditties, were carolled from morning till night; and the old games and merry-makings, prohibited as unlawful during the Protectorate, were restored with the monarchy.

The Parliament showed itself intensely loyal, and was ready to grant almost everything the king should please to ask; and Charles was not backward or loth to give his faithful subjects full scope for their generosity. In his long exile he had learned to take the world as he found it,

and especially to gratify his own desires in every way; but for the honour of England he had no care, and never seemed to think that the great office of King of England brought with it duties which must be fulfilled, and labour which he had no right to shirk. His talents were of a high order, and he had learned the art of reading the characters of men; but he was indolent, dishonest, and self-indulgent; and towards the end of his reign he became cruel. To gratify his own wishes he would sacrifice the welfare of his country at any time; and gratitude for services rendered was not in his nature. Thus it came to pass that his twenty-five years of rule present a sad contrast to the period when the stern genius of Cromwell swayed the destinies of Britain; and the reign of Charles II., brilliantly and hopefully begun, ended in failure, discontent, and disgrace.

Shortly after his accession, an act of indemnity or safety was passed, which secured pardon for those who had been concerned against the Government during the Protectorate; but from this pardon those who had actively participated in the trial and death of Charles I. were excluded. A mean revenge was taken on the dead bodies of Cromwell and his chief friends: the corpses were torn from their graves and publicly hanged at Tyburn. The Church of England was restored, and the bishops were reinstated; unfortunately also, the Dissenters and Roman Catholics were persecuted; for the people in those days had not yet learned that persecution is un-Christian in itself, and cannot therefore be taken as evidence of real religion. The best measure of the earlier part of Charles's reign was the installation of Hyde, the great and wise Earl of Clarendon, as Lord Chancellor; and so long as Charles allowed himself to be led by this honest counsellor, the affairs of the nation were prosperously conducted.

Charles married Catherine of Braganza, the daughter of the King of Portugal, receiving as the dowry of this princess a hundred thousand pounds in money, with the town of Tangier in Africa, and that of Bombay in the East Indies. It was quite in accordance with his usual character that he spent the dowry of his unfortunate wife, and then treated her exceeding ill, passing his time with worthless women, and exposing his queen to insult and neglect.





PLAGUE IN LONDON.

## THE PLAGUE OF LONDON.

He was always in want of funds, though Parliament had been very liberal to him; and for a sum of money to squander among his favourites he bartered away the town of Dunkirk, the last of Cromwell's conquests; and afterwards, for a further supply, he sold the honour of England and his own independence.

The pestilence known as the Great Plague of London broke out in the year 1665. The summer during that year had been exceptionally hot, and in the close unhealthy streets of the capital the plague raged with fearful violence: many who had been strong and well in the morning would suddenly feel themselves sick and faint; then dark spots appeared on the neck or chest; and frequently before evening came the sufferer was dead. The court fled in terror to Oxford, and all who could quit the plague-stricken city followed the fugitives as fast as possible. Numbers of servants, whose masters had fled from the doomed capital, were left to perish miserably with hunger; and when they made their way to the surrounding villages, the inhabitants were afraid to receive them for fear of infection, and drove them away, to die in the fields or by the road-side. In London itself the streets were deserted, and at last the grass grew in the principal thoroughfares. The few passengers whose business compelled them to come abroad, hurried fearfully along in the middle of the road, afraid to speak to any they met, and dreading lest the infection might seize upon them from the houses on either side. Watchmen were appointed to parade the city, and to drive back any inhabitant of an infected house who attempted to escape into the street. Every house where any inmate was stricken with the plague was distinguished by a red cross painted on the door, with the words "Lord have mercy upon us," painted round it. At night huge fires were lighted in the streets, to purify the air; and at midnight a hideous black cart rumbled through the silent city, preceded by a man who rang a bell and cried, "Bring out your dead! bring out your dead!"—for the only hope for the poor wretches shut up in the infected houses lay in getting rid, as quickly as possible, of the corpses of friends and relatives who had perished by the fell disease; and therefore the dead bodies were carried down and huddled into the cart, which rumbled away to the outskirts of the city, where huge pits had been dug, into which the corpses were cast

## THE GREAT FIRE.

by thousands. As week after week of that terrible summer went by, and the number of deaths by the plague increased, some men went mad with sheer horror; others became quite reckless, and gave themselves up to all kinds of wickedness; while others again, like the enthusiast, Solomon Eagle, went about increasing the general terror by declaring that God was going to destroy the whole of London, to punish the wickedness of the times. Some few distinguished men covered themselves with honour by their bravery and helpfulness in this trying time. Among these was General Monk, now created Duke of Albemarle, who had brought the king home, and who not only remained in London, but visited the sick and dying, and protected the property of many from the thieves who took advantage of the general confusion for purposes of robbery. At length, when the weather became cooler, the weekly number of deaths from the plague began to decrease, and the scourge gradually disappeared.

In the next year, 1666, an event happened which was at first looked upon as a great calamity, but which had a good effect, by furnishing an opportunity of rebuilding the capital on a better plan than that of long narrow streets of wooden houses, with no room for the passage of the free air of Heaven. This event was the great Fire of London. On the 2nd of September a fire broke out at a baker's house in Pudding Lane, near London Bridge. It spread rapidly, raging fiercely through the narrow lanes, and resisting all efforts made to overcome it. It spread westward towards the Temple, and before it burned itself out had destroyed nearly the whole of London. Four hundred and sixty streets, containing more than thirteen thousand houses, were burned to the ground, with eighty-nine churches, and the grand old cathedral of St. Paul's. For ten miles around London the night was lit up with a glare like that of noon day; and all the fields round the devoted city were filled with houseless families, huddled together beneath tents and coverlets, and surrounded by the goods they had been enabled to save in their hurry. In those days the hatred towards the Roman Catholics was so strong that the ignorant people declared the Papists had set the city on fire; and when a great column was erected on the spot where the conflagration had commenced, an inscription was placed on the base of this monument setting forth

## DISGRACEFUL STATE OF THE COUNTRY.

this pretended crime ; but the inscription has very properly been erased, and a truthful one substituted.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE REIGN OF CHARLES II. CONCLUDED.

Dismissal of Clarendon—The Dutch fleet in the Thames—Popular dislike to James—The Test Act—The Bill of Exclusion—Habeas Corpus Act—The Triple Alliance—Charles a prisoner of the French King—The Popish Plot—Murder of Godfrey—The Rye House Plot—Death of Charles.

FOR the two great calamities just recorded, the king and the Government were not responsible ; but the case was very different with the many misfortunes that befell England during Charles's reign, and which were due to the profligacy and carelessness of the king and his ministers. The wise advice of Clarendon was disregarded, and in time that honest counsellor was insulted, and a council of profligate nobles took his place in the king's favour. A war was commenced against Holland. At the commencement the English were fortunate ; but, after a time, the money voted by the Parliament for the equipment of ships and the pay of the sailors was appropriated by the king to his own use, and lamentable failure in the conduct of the war was the result. For a time the personal gallantry of the sailors and the bravery of such commanders as General Monk (who now acted as admiral) and of James, Duke of York, upheld the honour of Britain ; but when the Dutch fleet actually sailed up the Thames, and De Ruyter, the Dutch admiral, after burning Sheerness, destroyed some of the guard-ships in the Medway, a general indignation began to be felt throughout the country ; and, as the anger of the people is often directed against the innocent, while the guilty escape without censure, the popular outcry was cleverly turned by the courtiers against Lord Clarendon, almost the only honest and upright counsellor the king possessed. To Clarendon was imputed the blame of the very measures he had most strenuously opposed. He was dismissed from the

office of Chancellor, and was obliged to end his days in a foreign land. He retired to France, and there wrote his great book, the "History of the Rebellion."

As Queen Catherine bore no children to Charles, the king's brother, James, Duke of York, was the next heir to the throne. He had quitted the Protestant for the Roman Catholic religion; and the people feared that, if he came to govern the empire, he would seek to re-establish Popery and to root out Protestantism. Charles, too, was in his heart a Romanist; but as he had no wish to be sent once more into exile, he still outwardly conformed to the practice of the Church of England. To prevent the giving away of offices and places in the State service to Romanists, the Parliament passed the famous Test Act, which declared that none but members of the Church of England could be entrusted with offices in the State service or in the army and navy. The Commons tried to follow up this measure by another act, whose object was to exclude the Duke of York from the succession, because he had become a Romanist; but the House of Lords refused to pass this measure.

One bill of great importance, however, was passed. It is known as the Habeas Corpus Act, and provides that any one accused of a crime shall be brought before a magistrate immediately after being taken into custody, and shall be confronted with his accusers within a short time. This was to secure the liberty of the English, by taking away from the Government the power of imprisoning accused persons for a long time without bringing them to trial, or letting them clearly understand what crimes were alleged against them.

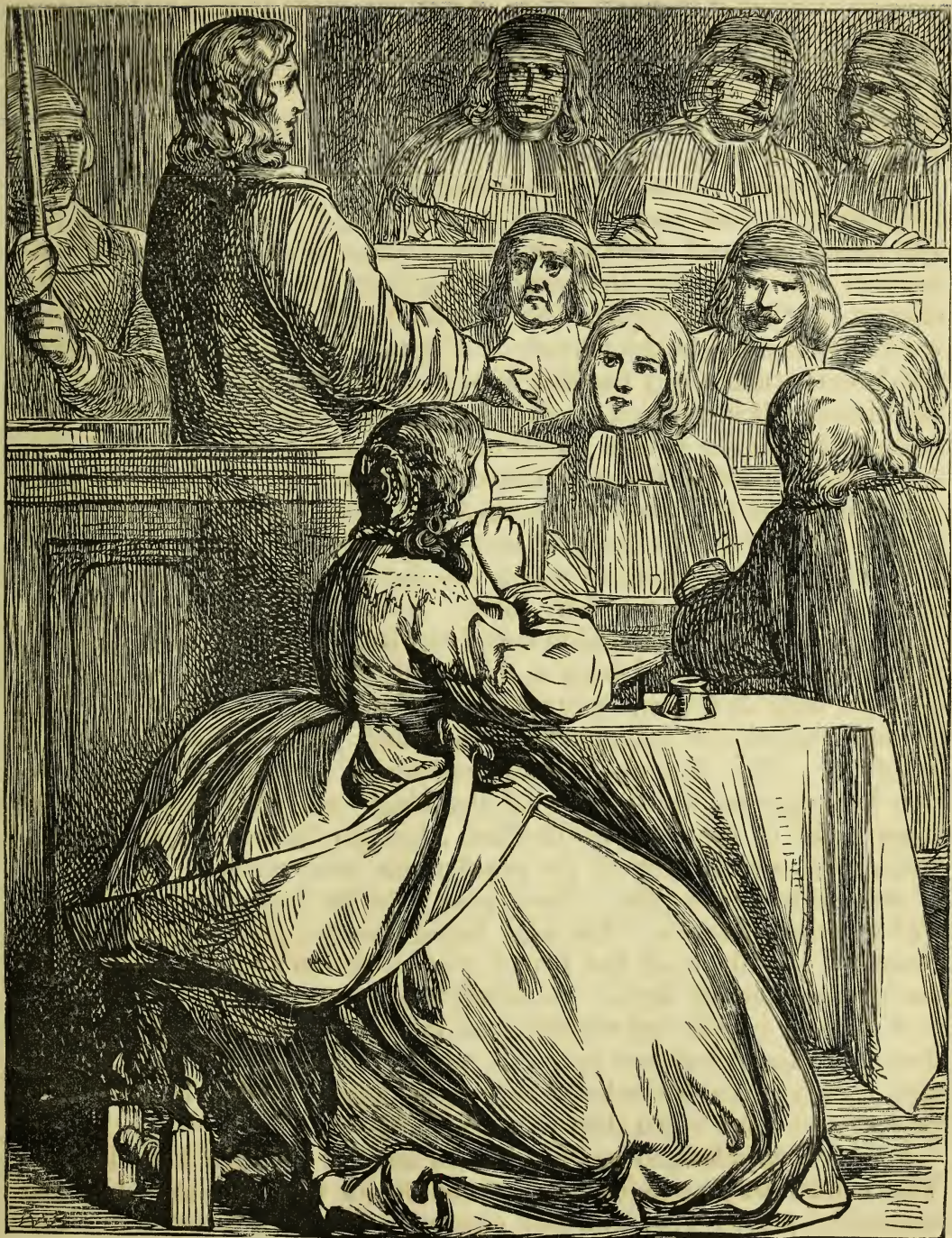
Louis XIV., King of France, was then the most powerful monarch of Europe. Ambitious and fond of glory, he determined to enlarge his dominions by making war upon his neighbours; more especially he was bent upon crushing the power of Holland. To prevent this, the Dutch made a treaty, called the Triple Alliance, with England and Sweden; and so long as these three countries stood together to help one another, the French king could not attack one of them without being obliged to fight the other two. But Louis knew that Charles would do almost anything for money, and by offering him a large yearly sum he managed to detach that unworthy king from the alliance; and thus the King of England

became a pensioner of the King of France, and Louis was left to pursue his ambitious projects without let or hindrance.

There were many who looked upon these disgraceful doings with secret anger and grief. The bad ministers chosen by the king to succeed the virtuous Clarendon obtained the name of the Cabal—and they deserved the title; for they were cunning, clever men, who cared only to please the king, and had no respect for the rights or privileges of the people. At last the discontent became so general that Charles was compelled to send away the Duke of York for a time; but he soon afterwards enraged the people still more by seizing the money paid into the exchequer for the expenses of the State—such as the payment of soldiers and sailors—and devoting it to his own purposes. He also kept an army round him, and the English felt more and more that their liberties were in danger.

A wicked rascal, named Titus Oates, now pretended to have discovered a plot laid by the Roman Catholics against the State. He declared that the Romanists intended to create a rebellion in England, to murder the king, and overthrow the Government. Unfortunately, the magistrate before whom Oates had made his declaration, Sir Edmondsbury Godfrey, was found murdered soon after, near London; and Oates and his companions immediately asserted that the Catholics had committed this murder. How Godfrey came by his death was never found out; but the people believed that some Catholics had really killed him, and that there was truth in what Oates said. A number of people were arrested, and many suffered death on the charge of being concerned in a plot which, it is now believed, never had any real existence, but was invented, from beginning to end, by the villain Oates, who managed to enrich himself by means of the false accusations he made. So great was the outcry against the king's brother James, the head of the Catholics in England, that he was obliged to fly to the continent for safety.

The English had indeed good reason to be suspicious of this James, and to look with dismay on the prospect of his becoming king upon Charles's death. During the latter years of Charles's reign James was sent to govern Scotland; and there he made himself detested by his tyranny. Charles endeavoured, as his father had done, to force the Scotch to adopt the English liturgy; and James was guilty of the most detestable cruelty



TRIAL OF LORD WILLIAM RUSSELL.

towards the poor prisoners brought before him, and charged with the high crime of being Dissenters.

Many a poor covenanter did he cause to be tortured, the favourite instrument for that purpose being an iron boot, in which one leg of the sufferer was fastened, while wooden wedges were driven in with a hammer between the boot and the wearer's leg, till the bones were horribly crushed. Himself a Papist, James pursued with vindictive rage all who would not conform to the Church of England, in which he did not himself believe; and many dreadful stories are told of his cruelties, and of the wicked acts committed by his friend Claverhouse, Lord Dundee, who entered the houses of the unfortunate covenanters with parties of his dragoons, and killed many of them. Even women and children were put to death in this persecution; and the latter years of Charles II.'s rule are remembered in Scotland with well-merited horror.

A real plot, the object of which was the capture, if not the murder, of the king, was discovered in 1682. A certain Richard Rumbold, a maltster, owned an old mansion called the Rye House, in Hertfordshire; and this man, who had been a soldier of Cromwell's, determined to seize the king as Charles returned from the races at Newmarket. An accident caused the failure of the plot, and Rumbold escaped to the continent. But this was a good opportunity for revenge upon those who had opposed the tyranny of the king; and thus Lord William Russell, son of the Duke of Bedford, Algernon Sidney, the old patriot, and several other leaders of the popular side, were arrested and accused of complicity in this plot. They were tried for high treason, but the trial was not a fair one. The king had determined that these men, who advocated the liberty of the British people, should die, and every point was strained against them. In Sidney's case especially the proceedings were illegal; for the law requires that in cases of treason two witnesses should be found, but now only one could be discovered. Both Russell and Sidney were beheaded; and these unjust doings rendered the Government more hated than it had been before.

Lord William Russell had a good and amiable wife, the Lady Rachel. This faithful lady attended her husband on his trial, and after his condemnation prayed with him, and comforted him to the very last. The



## EXECUTION OF RUSSELL—DEATH OF THE KING.

parting with his beloved consort was the greatest grief Lord Russell had to undergo; and when he had said farewell to her for the last time, in his prison, he exclaimed, "The bitterness of death is past!" He was beheaded in Lincoln's Inn Fields, and died with the courage and resignation of a Christian.

And now the ill-spent reign of Charles II. was nearly over, and the time came when the king must die. In February, 1685, he was seized with a fit, and it became evident that his hours on earth were numbered. He had never been a sincere Protestant; and now that he was dying, and concealment was of no further use, he had a Roman Catholic priest brought to his bed-side, and received the sacrament according to the rites of the Romish Church. After lingering for four days he died.

His reign had been unhappy and inglorious; and the life of this king is remembered in history as an instance of talents wasted and of great opportunities neglected.

## CHAPTER III.

### JAMES II.

James a Roman Catholic—General apprehensions on his coming to the throne—His morose and cruel disposition—Fair promises made by the new King—Rebellion of the Duke of Monmouth—Defeat and capture of Monmouth—Monmouth's interview with James—His execution—Judge Jeffreys—The "Bloody Circuit."

JAMES, Duke of York, the younger brother of Charles II., became King of England at Charles's death, with the title of James II. He had long been unpopular. His religion had for many years been the Roman Catholic; and, more honest than the witty, profligate Charles, he had made no secret of being a Papist. In Scotland he had shown a cruel morose spirit, and the severities he had inflicted when he ruled as viceroy for his brother filled many with gloomy forebodings of what he would do now that he reigned for himself as king.

## THE DUKE OF MONMOUTH'S REBELLION.

Those of the Parliament, in both Houses, who had tried to exclude him from the succession, were apprehensive that the new king would revenge himself upon them; but at the beginning of his reign he showed no disposition to do so. He promised to uphold the Church of England, and to rule according to the laws; and gradually the alarm subsided, and it seemed that James would have a peaceful reign. But those who hoped for such a blessing soon found themselves deceived.

It soon appeared that James was bent upon favouring his Roman Catholic subjects at the expense of the Protestants, and that none but Papists could aspire to the king's confidence and favour. So the old distrust was quickly awakened again.

The weak and foolish Duke of Monmouth, of whom many of the people were very fond, probably because he was the opposite in appearance and manners to his gloomy uncle King James, landed in the west of England, with the avowed purpose of driving James from the throne of England, and seating himself there. At the same time a revolt broke out in the north, headed by the Duke of Argyle. The rebellion of Argyle was quickly crushed, and the duke suffered death for his attempt to overthrow the Government; but Monmouth's rebellion, for a time at least, seemed more formidable. When the duke came over from Holland, and landed at Lyme, in Dorsetshire, in June, 1685, many of the peasants of the west, with whom he was very popular, went to join him; but the nobility and gentry, upon whose aid he had counted, held aloof. At Taunton he was received with shouts of welcome, and proclaimed king; but the regular army of King James, with the Earl of Faversham at its head, was rapidly marching towards the west; and to oppose these disciplined troops, Monmouth had only a brave and loyal, but totally unpractised, rabble of peasant soldiers, hastily armed with pikes and similar weapons, which had in many cases been roughly manufactured from scythes and other agricultural implements.

At Sedgemoor, near Bridgewater, was decided the last battle that ever was fought upon English ground. Monmouth's scythemen and carters fought like Englishmen, gallantly and well; but they were no match for the disciplined army of the king, among whom were the soldiers of Colonel Kirke's famous regiment from Tangier in Africa. Mon-



MONMOUTH ENTREATING JAMES II. FOR HIS LIFE.

## DEFEAT, CAPTURE, AND EXECUTION OF MONMOUTH.

mouth's army soon fell into confusion; and while they were still fighting bravely the duke fled from the battle. A complete rout ensued, and many of the poor peasants were butchered as they were attempting to escape from the scene of slaughter. Monmouth hid himself for a time in the fields; but the search made for him was so strict that he could not escape; and at last he was discovered hiding in a ditch, wet, miserable, and half starved. He was immediately conveyed to London as a prisoner; and as he had been taken in open rebellion against the king, no one doubted that he would be put to death. But James was not content with leaving Monmouth to suffer the penalty of revolt—he must needs feast his eyes upon the distress and anguish of his fallen enemy, and accordingly granted Monmouth an interview. The unhappy duke, judging probably that his uncle would not have consented to see him unless it was intended that some mercy would be shown, fell on his knees and begged hard for his life, professing the most abject contrition for the crime of which he had been guilty. But James would hear of no mercy, and sent the poor prisoner back to his dungeon, desolate and broken-hearted. A few days afterwards, Monmouth was beheaded on Tower Hill; and it would have been well had he alone been made the sufferer for his rash and foolish attempt on the English crown.

But James, though in many respects more honest than his profligate brother Charles, was a cruel, revengeful king. The word "mercy" had no place in the gloomy ceremonies he called religion. When once he had been offended, he never forgot or forgave, and not even his own interest could make him forego his revenge. Therefore he determined to punish the adherents of Monmouth in the west of England with a severity that should strike terror into all discontented spirits, and awe into terrified silence every voice that had been raised in disapproval of him or his measures. Colonel Kirke, of the Tangier regiment, had already hanged and quartered many of the misguided peasants who had fought for "King Monmouth;" and we are told how, at Taunton, the town to which Kirke marched after the battle, a number of unhappy wretches were strung up on a gallows in sight of the inn where Kirke and his officers were enjoying themselves over their wine. But this was not enough to satisfy James. He sent Judge Jeffreys, a man as cruel

## THE "BLOODY ASSIZES."

as himself, into the west, to try and punish all the rebels who could be caught; and the assize or court held in Somersetshire by this wicked judge is still remembered among the peasants as the "Bloody Assize." Jeffreys afterwards boasted publicly that he had hanged more traitors than any judge had condemned since the time of William the Conqueror; and there is every reason to believe that he spoke the truth. He moreover had the baseness to jest and jeer at the unhappy victims as they stood trembling before him. Poor half-witted labourers, who hardly knew what the word "treason" meant, but who had thought it a fine thing to fight for "King Monmouth," were hurried out of the world with indecent haste and ruthless cruelty. An old lady was put to death merely for having given shelter to two of Monmouth's friends, who tried to conceal themselves in her house after the battle of Sedgemoor; and great numbers of poor people were sent to America and the West Indies to be sold as slaves. Among the prisoners at these assizes were some children, who had presented a flag to Monmouth at Taunton when he entered that town. They could not have been very dangerous traitors, those poor little children; but neither childhood nor old age was exempt from the cruelty of the savage king or of his ruffian judge. Far from disapproving the acts of Jeffreys in the west, the king was scarcely satisfied that enough had been done, and would have preferred to see even more victims sacrificed. The memory of that evil time has remained in the west down to the present day. Long after the tyranny of James and the ferocity of Jeffreys had become matters of the past, the peasants sitting round the winter fire would tell the story of the "Bloody Assize," and recall the names of many of the poor victims of the cruelty of that ruthless court—of many simple villagers slaughtered for appearing in arms to support a cause which they conscientiously believed to be a good and righteous one.

But though cruelty and oppression may flourish for a time, justice and right will triumph in the end; and the king who could thus forget mercy, and the unjust judge who substituted wrong for right to please a cruel master, did not go unpunished.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE REIGN OF JAMES II. CONCLUDED.

James attempts the subversion of the Protestant religion—The army at Hounslow—Birth of the Prince of Wales—The King insults the Universities—The Declaration of Indulgence—The Seven Bishops sent to the Tower—Their trial and acquittal—The English determine to dethrone James—Invitation of the Prince of Orange—William lands in England—Flight of the King and Queen—William and Mary proclaimed.

THE “Bloody Assize” was over; the last of the prisoners taken after Monmouth’s unhappy rebellion had suffered the penalty of his rashness; the people, though horrified at what had been done, and indignant at the ruthless conduct of the Government, remained quiet and made no sign of revolt; and James foolishly thought that the empire of Britain was entirely in his power. Now, therefore, he imagined he could carry out a scheme he had set his heart upon accomplishing. This scheme was nothing less than the putting down of the Protestant religion in England and the restoration of the supremacy of the Pope. He accordingly began to put Roman Catholics into the chief offices of the State, a proceeding directly contrary to the laws; he dismissed many Protestants from their posts, and gave the offices they had held to Roman Catholic friends of his own; and, by many acts of violence and oppression, he made it manifest to all that the liberties of the English nation, in Church and State, could not stand if he continued to rule. In Ireland he dismissed the Viceroy, the old Duke of Ormond, who was looked upon with respect and admiration for his justice and kindness, and gave Ormond’s office to a friend of his own, Colonel Talbot, whom he created Earl of Tyrconnel. The Roman Catholic mass was now publicly celebrated in England; and to guard against any attempt on the people’s part to resist this tyranny by open force, James established an army of 15,000 men, whom he kept ready at Hounslow, a few miles from London. As James was already growing old, the English might have endured these wrongs in the hope of better times after the king’s death; but these hopes were

extinguished when James's second wife, the Roman Catholic Mary of Modena, gave birth to a son, who, it was rightly suspected, would be educated in his father's religion.

The University of Oxford had always been on the king's side in the time of the great civil war, and, after the Restoration, had continued to take part with the Crown. James rewarded this fidelity by forcing the colleges to accept his own friends as their rulers; and to all remonstrances he only replied that his will must be obeyed. The better to carry out his design of substituting Roman Catholics for Protestants in the chief places of the State, he issued a decree, which he called a Declaration of Liberty of Conscience; and ordered that this declaration should be publicly read in every parish church.

Seven of the bishops presented a petition to James, remonstrating against this declaration. James, to frighten them, ordered them into custody; and they were sent to the Tower on the charge of having published a false and seditious libel against the king.

The people at last rose up in anger. They had endured much tyranny and oppression in silence; but their patience was at length exhausted. The bishops were triumphantly acquitted, and even the king's troops at Hounslow shared the general joy when the verdict of the jury was made known.

And now a number of the most influential gentry and nobles determined to drive James from the throne he disgraced, and to set up in his stead a king who would rule according to justice and right, and one on whose word they could rely.

The republic of Holland was governed by William, Prince of Orange Nassau, a wise and politic prince, who had shown great courage and ability in defending his country against the power of the ambitious King Louis XIV. of France. This William had married Mary, a daughter of James II. Both Mary and her husband were Protestants, and therefore it was hoped that they would support the Protestant religion which James hated so bitterly. Accordingly, an invitation was sent over to Holland, requesting William to come to England and settle the affairs of the nation; and in November, 1688, the Prince of Orange landed with an army in the west of England, where Monmouth had made his

unhappy attempt three years before. Those three years of tyranny and bigotry had made a vast difference in the temper of the English people towards their king. No one trusted to the promises of James, although when he declared that he would punish his enemies, it was certain he would keep his word; and the Prince of Orange had been but a few days in England before the king's friends began to fall away from him.

James now became seriously alarmed, and made some offers of concession; but he was not believed. His chief officers deserted him; his own daughter Anne followed their example; and the king, at last losing heart, fled from London by night, with the queen and the infant Prince of Wales. The queen and prince got safely to France, but at Faversham, in Kent, the king was recognized, and brought back to London.

The people were delighted at the prospect of a change in the government, and were in a great state of excitement all over the country. They threatened to murder Judge Jeffreys, and that cruel judge, feeling sure that he should meet with no mercy if he fell into their hands, was seized with abject fear, and begged to be sent for safety to the Tower of London. His wish was complied with, and in the Tower he died soon afterwards, hated by all; and that hatred has lasted to the present day.

Meanwhile the Prince of Orange was coming nearer and nearer to London; and as he advanced James retreated. When William entered London, James retired to Rochester, after trying, at the last moment, to come to some agreement; and a few days later saw the Prince of Orange established in St. James's Palace, while James, seeing there was no hope for him in England, privately quitted Rochester, and embarked in a small vessel for France, which he reached in safety. The French King Louis XIV. received him with great kindness and hospitality, provided him amply with money, and gave him the palace of St. Germain, near Paris, for a residence; and here King James lived for more than twelve years. He made an attempt to regain his throne by invading Ireland, as we shall see recorded in the events of the next reign, but he never set foot again in England. More than his tyranny and oppression, more than the disregard he had shown for the liberties of the English, that dark business of the "Bloody Assize" in the west was remembered against him. The English had experienced what manner of man he was, and





FLIGHT OF JAMES II. FROM LONDON.

## WILLIAM AND MARY OCCUPY THE THRONE.

would not again trust themselves in the hands of a king who understood revenge, but knew nothing of mercy.

When James had thus departed never to return, the question arose—By whom was England now to be governed? After much deliberation it was resolved that the crown should be conferred upon William and his consort Mary, who henceforth should rule jointly under the name of William III. and Mary II.; and on the 13th of February, 1689, proclamation was made to this effect.

Thus, for the second time, was a Stuart king driven from the throne of England; and this great change, which was effected without bloodshed, by the mere strength of the hatred the English bore to tyranny, is known in our history as the great Revolution of 1688.

## CHAPTER V.

### WILLIAM III. (ORANGE-NASSAU) AND MARY II. (STUART).

Coronation of William and Mary—The Bill of Rights—James II. attempts the reconquest of England—Battle of the Boyne—James again flies to France—James's adherents in Scotland—Fight at Killiecrankie, and death of Dundee—An abstract of the provisions of the Bill of Rights.

ON the 11th of April, 1689, William, Prince of Orange, and Mary, the daughter of the exiled King James II., were solemnly crowned in Westminster Abbey as William III. and Mary II., King and Queen of England.

The English had not, however, invested them with this dignity without first taking steps to secure their own freedom, and to prevent a recurrence of the tyrannical acts that had disgraced the reign of the late king. A solemn PETITION OF RIGHTS had been drawn up, in which it was exactly stated what privileges the people possessed; and the king was prohibited from interfering with those privileges in any way. This celebrated memorial afterwards became law, under the name of the BILL OF RIGHTS. So that now the king ruled by a compact made with the

## JAMES ATTEMPTS TO RECONQUER ENGLAND—BATTLE OF BOYNE.

people, and could no longer shelter himself behind his “divine right” when he governed wrong.

But though King James had run away from England, he had not by any means abandoned the idea of regaining the throne which by his own unworthiness he had lost. Louis XIV. of France, the great despot of Europe, had received him hospitably, and was ready to help him to the utmost with men and money: for this Louis was the sworn enemy of William of Orange, against whom he had carried on a long war when William was Stadtholder of Holland, almost driving him from his native country, and inflicting the greatest injuries upon him. William therefore hastened to ally himself with the German States, for he knew that strength lay in union; and thus there were three States—Britain, Holland, and Germany—who would stand together to oppose the encroachments of the ambitious Louis XIV.

How necessary these precautions were was made manifest by the measures Louis had already taken. He declared that James II. was the real and true King of England, totally denying the claim of William, who had been chosen by the people; for, indeed, the voice of the people counted for nothing in the estimation of a king who allowed no will but his own to sway the destinies of the realm he governed, and whose power was so absolute and undivided, that he was accustomed to say, “*L’Etat c’est moi* :” “I am the State.” It was, therefore, quite in accordance with the character and sentiments of Louis that he should provide the fugitive James with men and money for the reconquering of the British empire; and as the majority of the inhabitants of Ireland were Roman Catholics, it was settled that this army should descend upon the Irish coast, and commence operations there; so that first Ireland, and then England and Scotland, might be regained, and the Prince of Orange driven back to Holland whence he came.

The Catholic population of the south of Ireland welcomed James II. with the greatest enthusiasm. The exiled king made his entry into Dublin in March, 1689, and Lord Tyrconnel raised an army for him. William saw the full danger of his position; and after sending the Duke of Schomberg to Ireland, landed there himself, at Carrickfergus. On the 1st of July, 1690, was fought the battle of the Boyne, near Drog-

heda, which ended in the entire defeat of James, who on that occasion disgraced himself by quitting the field before the fortune of the day was decided. In the north, the French army, under the Count de Rosen, had already been foiled at the siege of Londonderry, whose Protestant garrison held out with heroic valour, though provisions had become so scarce that they were forced to eat rats, and similar vermin. Considering his cause hopeless, James departed for France, while the brave Irish Catholics still fought valiantly for the monarch who had deserted them. The City of Limerick, in particular, made a noble resistance, and was not surrendered till the following year, when it had become too manifest that King James was not worth fighting for. Even then many gallant men went into voluntary exile, preferring to quit their country for ever, rather than submit to a king whose right to the throne they did not recognize.

In Scotland, too, James had many partisans. The chief of these was his friend Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee, a ruthless and bloodthirsty man, who had gained the name of "Bloody Clavers" for his cruelties practised upon the covenanters in the last years of the reign of Charles II. Dundee died in the arms of victory at Killiecrankie. For all his cruelty, he was a brave and high-spirited man, and fought for the gloomy tyrant James with a gallantry worthy of a better cause.

In closing this chapter, it will be well to enumerate a few of the conditions stipulated for in the Bill of Rights, that we may understand upon what basis the government of England was now placed. They were briefly these:—"That the king cannot dispense with the law, nor make fresh laws by himself: laws must be made by the Parliament. The king may not raise money by his own authority: the Parliament alone has the right of levying taxes. It is the right of subjects to petition the king, and all commitments or prosecutions for such petitions are illegal. (This was to prevent any arbitrary measure like the trial of the seven bishops.) That elections of members to Parliament ought to be free, and that all measures ought to be freely discussed in Parliament. That the king may not raise or keep a standing army in time of peace, except with the consent of the Parliament."

In short, the general tenour of the Bill of Rights was to destroy the



WILLIAM AND MARY ON THE THRONE.

## FAITHLESS CONDUCT OF THE ENGLISH POLITICIANS.

idea that the king could govern alone; for the English people were determined that the Parliament should share the power with the king, and that the freedom, to gain which they had made so many sacrifices, should not again be lightly endangered.

### CHAPTER VI.

#### THE REIGN OF WILLIAM III. AND MARY II. CONCLUDED.

Distinction between "Whigs" and "Tories"—Origin of those names—Faithlessness and treachery of the English politicians—Unpopularity of William, and its cause—Massacre of Glencoe—The Darien scheme—Battle of La Hogue—Steinkirk—Namur—Treaty of Ryswick—Toleration Act—The Bank of England founded—Death of Mary—Death of William—Peter the Great of Russia.

DURING the last few years the two great parties in the State had been known by the names of Whigs and Tories. The Tories advocated the divine right of kings, and declared that all resistance against the regal power was wrong: the Whigs declared that the king ruled by a compact with the people, and was only to be obeyed so long as he governed according to law. Both these names were, in the first instance, used as terms of reproach, the word "whig" meaning a sour, discontented fellow; while "tory" meant much the same as "freebooter" or "robber." But the words were retained long after their evil meanings were forgotten, and in the next century a Tory was a supporter of the king, while a Whig was supposed to be a friend of the people.

King William had been placed on the throne by the Whigs; and the Tories, in the first instance, were his opponents. But he soon found his position in England an irksome and disagreeable one. The man who had been an avowed Whig one year often became a Tory the next. If he thought himself not properly paid for his support of the new king, he would become a partisan of the old one. Even the ministers and councillors of William frequently kept up a correspondence with the exiled king, who held his court at St. Germain, and William had hardly any



MASSACRE OF GLENCOE.

one on whom he could rely. No wonder, therefore, that his new subjects thought him cold and suspicious, and that he never became popular among them; but none could deny that he ruled justly, and that he could be merciful to an enemy and generous to a friend. He wished to be King of England, and not merely the head of a faction; and in trying to do justice to all he was frequently so unfortunate as to please none. He had weak health, moreover; and many unfavourably contrasted his pale, careworn countenance and abrupt manners with the winning grace of King Charles II., forgetting that the merry monarch had been content to purchase his jovial comfort at the expense of the national honour, and that much of William's ill-temper proceeded from a heart and brain racked with physical pain, and still more with anxiety for the welfare of the great States he had been called upon to govern.

The massacre of the clan Macdonald of Glencoe is one of the most unfortunate events of this reign. The Macdonalds had submitted to William's rule, but were nevertheless put to death under circumstances of great barbarity, by a party of soldiers whom they had received as guests, and who rose up in the night-time, and slew them. How far the king knew of this bad business has never been clearly ascertained; but such a deliberate piece of cruelty was so foreign to his nature, that we cannot believe he knew what was going to be done, or that he really gave his consent. Another unfortunate event was the Darien scheme. A number of emigrants went from Scotland to establish a colony on the Isthmus of Darien, or Panama, in Central America. The idea was a good one, but much jealousy was aroused by the thought that the Scotch should form this colony; and the protection and encouragement due to the emigrants being denied them, the whole affair ended in a miserable failure. But these unfortunate events were counterbalanced by great and important successes in other quarters.

William had always felt sure that Louis XIV. was the great enemy of peace in Europe, and that unless the ambition of that powerful monarch were kept in check, there would be no safety for any European State. Therefore the war against France was vigorously carried on by England and Holland combined; and the English and Dutch fleets gained a great triumph over the French off Cape La Hogue on the 19th of May, 1692.





THE CZAR PETER OF RUSSIA IN DEPTFORD DOCKYARD.

From this time England resumed the empire of the sea, which she had held in the days of stout old Oliver, and never again has she lost it.

By land William was not so successful, though he had the services of John Churchill, Earl (afterwards Duke) of Marlborough. The armies of Louis XIV. were vast in number, distinguished for heroic valour, and headed by experienced commanders; nevertheless, though worsted at Steinkirk in Flanders in 1693, William took the strong city of Namur, 26th of August, 1695; and at last, Louis, finding that he was exhausting his strength against an enemy whom he could not subdue, made peace with William, acknowledging him as King of England; and the Treaty of Ryswick was signed in 1698.

This war cost England a great deal of money, and much discontent arose in consequence. But it was a necessary war; and the Commons, while they voted what money the king required, took care in return to secure for themselves new privileges and new guarantees for their liberty. Thus it was settled that there should be a new Parliament every three years; that the king should have a certain sum of money allowed him for his private expenses, the rest of the taxes being paid directly into the treasury, and spent exclusively upon the objects for which they had been voted; a Toleration Act was passed for the benefit of the Dissenters, whom James had persecuted; and a new coinage was struck at the royal mint, under the superintendence of the great philosopher, Sir Isaac Newton. The Bank of England was also founded in this reign.

Queen Mary died in 1694, to the inexpressible grief of her husband. Her younger sister, the Princess Anne, was now the next heir to the throne; and it was settled that if Anne died without heirs, the crown should pass to the Electress Sophia of Hanover, a granddaughter of James I. In 1702 the king fell from his horse at Hampton Court, and broke his collar-bone. At first the accident was not considered serious, but the king caught cold, and died in a few days. He had ruled wisely and well in England for more than twelve years.

Peter the Great, Czar or Emperor of Russia, paid a visit to England, chiefly to watch the process of ship-building as carried on in the dock-yard at Deptford, where he worked as a journeyman. He lived at the house of a distinguished man named Evelyn, and passed many an evening

at a tavern in Rotherhithe, which still retains the name of the “Czar’s Head.” Peter was a very “rough diamond,” fond of rude sports, and much addicted to drinking brandy with pepper in it. The nobleman who had been deputed by William to attend upon his royal guest had much difficulty in keeping the Czar out of mischief.

## CHAPTER VII.

### QUEEN ANNE.

*Influence of the Churchills at the court of Queen Anne—Louis XIV. declares in favour of the Pretender—The Spanish succession—Marlborough’s victories—Battle of Blenheim—The fortress of Gibraltar taken—Oudenarde—Malplaquet.*

ANNE, the second daughter of King James II., was now proclaimed Queen of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and, according to old custom, the title Queen of France was added, though this latter was a very empty honour, for the monarchs of England might as well have been entitled kings of Timbuctoo as of France. Anne was a weak woman, capable of doing very little for herself; and as a weak nature generally finds a strong one to lean upon, the queen had for a long time been ruled by a very clever but somewhat turbulent woman, Sarah, the wife of the Earl of Marlborough. The earl was at the head of the Whig party; and so long as his wife governed the queen, the Whigs governed England.

The Tories and the adherents of the exiled Stuarts, who were called Jacobites (from *Jacobus*, James), now thought there was a good chance for them in England, for James II. had died at St. Germain in 1701, and his son, James Francis Edward, was the next lineal heir to the crown. Louis XIV., whose power had been increasing since the peace of Ryswick, declared in favour of the young prince, who was called in England the “Pretender,” and it soon became evident that war would once more break out between the two countries.

The King of Spain had recently died, leaving his dominions to the

Duke of Anjou, grandson of Louis XIV. But the Emperor of Germany considered that he had a claim upon the crown of Spain, which had belonged to Charles V. two centuries before; and as the Government of Queen Anne was highly offended with the French king for his support of the Pretender, and moreover thought it very dangerous that the French royal family of the Bourbons should possess both France and Spain, it was decided that the English, in conjunction with the Dutch, should support the claims of the Emperor; and thus broke out the great War of the Spanish Succession.

The great Duke of Marlborough was made Commander-in-Chief of the British and Dutch troops. In 1702 he began operations in Flanders, and soon showed himself "the right man in the right place." His skill was consummate. He knew exactly when and where to attack the enemy. The marshals and commanders of the army of Louis XIV. were astonished and confounded at his skill and courage; and as for his own troops, they had such perfect confidence in their general, that after a year or two they marched into battle with a certainty of victory; and the French became more and more dispirited as they saw the wonderful success of their opponents.

In 1703 Marlborough was again victorious, though the Dutch were defeated by the French; but in 1704 he gained a triumph which threw all his former achievements into the shade. This was the celebrated battle of Blenheim, near Hochstedt, in Bavaria, gained over the French Marshal Tallard by Marlborough in conjunction with Prince Eugene of Savoy. Tallard himself was taken prisoner; 11,000 of his troops fell into the hands of the English, and a great number of cannon and standards were taken. This was the most terrible blow the power of Louis had yet received. In the same year the English gained another triumph in the capture of the strong fortress of Gibraltar, at the entrance of the Mediterranean. This important place, which has now been held by the English for 160 years, was taken by Sir George Rooke, with the assistance of some brave English captains.

The war was again carried into Flanders; and with such brilliant success, that Marlborough's soldiers at last looked upon their general as the very Genius of Victory. He was never more calm and collected than



## BATTLES OF OUDENARDE AND MALPLAQUET.

when in the midst of the battle, with the cannon roaring around him. While his ally, the brave Prince Eugene of Savoy, seemed possessed with a kind of warlike fury, and raged in the battle-day like a lion, the duke would ride to and fro, quiet and cool, with a thoughtful smile upon his handsome face, noting every change in the fortune of the fight, and ready to give each order exactly at the right moment.

Victory crowned the efforts of the army in Flanders. On the 23rd of May, 1706, the battle of Ramillies was gained. The 7th of July, 1708, saw the English defeat the French at Oudenarde, killing or wounding nearly 4,000 of them, and taking a hundred standards; and on the 11th of September, 1709, Marlborough was again victorious, after a furious conflict, at Malplaquet. But in this last battle the carnage was so fearful—so many brave soldiers were slain, and so little real advantage seemed to be gained by their deaths—that the English began to grow weary of the strife; and the people began to ask whether it was worth while that all this bloodshed and misery should be allowed to continue, merely that Marlborough might grow richer and more famous, and keep in power the Whig party who supported him.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE REIGN OF QUEEN ANNE CONCLUDED.

Union of England and Scotland—Death of Prince George of Denmark—The Jacobites hope to obtain the succession for the Stuarts—The Whig party, on the Duke of Marlborough's disgrace, lose power—Dr. Sacheverell—Treaty of Utrecht—Whig and Tory dissensions—Death of Anne.

EVER since the year 1603 England and Scotland had been ruled by the same monarch; nevertheless, they had always been regarded as separate kingdoms. But now it was proposed to unite them, and have only one Parliament for both; the Scotch being allowed to send a certain number of peers to the Upper House, and forty-five members to the



MARLBOROUGH AT RAMILLIES.

House of Commons, that their country might be properly represented in the Council of the State. Much dissatisfaction was expressed in the north when this arrangement was proposed, for it was feared that the interests of Scotland would be disregarded. After much opposition, however, the measure was carried into effect—England and Scotland became one kingdom, though each preserved its own laws; and the result has been the gaining of many advantages for both. Countries under the same rule cannot hold too closely together; for by union they become strong.

This union of England and Scotland was effected in the year 1707. In the following year the queen lost her husband, the Prince George of Denmark. She had been the mother of many children, but all were now dead; and as the queen was growing old, the hopes of the Jacobites began to revive, and it was thought that perhaps the son of James II. might be brought over from France, as his uncle Charles II. had been in 1660, and the direct Stuart line might continue to reign in England, after all.

One of the chief reasons for these hopes lay in the fact that the queen herself was supposed to favour her half-brother, the "Pretender," as he was called. She was getting tired of the Whig party, and especially of the Duchess of Marlborough, who presumed upon the brilliant services her husband was rendering to the State, and treated her royal mistress with open disrespect. A certain Abigail Hill had been introduced at court by the imperious duchess, and filled a humble office about the queen's person; and Mistress Hill made herself so agreeable to the queen, that in time she became a prime favourite; and in proportion as she rose in her Majesty's favour, the duchess fell into disgrace. Abigail Hill (who afterwards became Lady Masham) belonged to the Tory party; and gradually the Tories came into favour. The old doctrine of passive obedience, and of the wickedness of revolutions, began to gain ground; and when a clergyman named Sacherevell preached a foolish and seditious sermon in London, and was tried for this offence, a great difficulty was found in convicting him; for the people began to take his side, and it was believed that the queen secretly favoured him also.

Thus, in spite of his great successes, Marlborough gradually fell into



disgrace at court. He had made few personal friends, for he was inordinately fond of money, and tried to appropriate to himself the whole credit of all that was done. He took bribes, and had a tendency "to sell and mart his offices for gold, to undeservers," there is no doubt; but in those days bribery was so common, that no one would have noticed this had not the duke been personally unpopular. However, this charge of bribery was used as a pretext to attack the great general in Parliament; and he was deprived of his offices, and suspended from the command of the army he had so often led to victory. He retired to the continent, and remained there until after the queen's death; and his dismissal was looked upon as a great triumph gained by the Tories.

At length, in 1713, the long War of the Spanish Succession was ended by the Treaty of Utrecht. Louis XIV. gained the point for which he had begun the strife: the House of Bourbon was established upon the Spanish throne; but France had been terribly weakened in the long contest. Many of her best men had fallen on the blood-stained fields of Flanders and Germany; enormous taxes had been raised to pay the expenses of the war; trade and commerce had declined; and the people were sinking deeper and deeper into misery and want. In England also the burden of the war had been severely felt. The Government had been obliged to borrow many millions of money, and to tax the people heavily; for Blenheim, Ramillies, Oudenarde, and Malplaquet were expensive battles to win. By the Peace of Utrecht some few advantages were gained, such as the cession of Newfoundland and Hudson's Bay in America, and the West Indian island of St. Christopher; but in general the Treaty of Utrecht gave little satisfaction; and the Whigs especially cried out that the Tories were betraying the country, and throwing away the advantages gained during the long and arduous strife.

While the Whigs and Tories were thus accusing each other, it became visible to all that the queen had not much longer to live: she was evidently sinking; but the quarrelling still went on. The Whigs were fearful that the Elector of Hanover's claim to the throne might be set aside; and the Tories were watching for an opportunity to urge the rights of the Pretender as the brother of the queen and the lineal heir to the crown. While the queen lay dying, there was a violent disturb-

ance in the council chamber ; but some of the Whig noblemen, especially the Scottish Duke of Argyle, acted with great vigour and prudence. The Elector was informed of the impending death of the queen, and desired to hold himself in readiness to embark for England at any moment; and preparations were made to proclaim him King of Great Britain and Ireland as soon as the queen should close her eyes.

Very shortly before her death Anne deprived Harley, Earl of Oxford, of his office of Lord Treasurer ; and this was a great blow to the Tory party. She bestowed the staff of office upon the Earl of Shrewsbury, begging him to use his power for the good of her people. Then she relapsed into a lethargic state, and, on the 1st of August, 1714, died peacefully and quietly, after a reign of twelve years.

## PART IX. THE HOUSE OF HANOVER.



### CHAPTER I.

#### GEORGE I.

The Whigs regain power—Unpopularity of the King—The rebellion of 1715—Death of Louis XIV.—Defeat of the rebels—Flight of the Pretender—Execution of Lords Derwentwater and Kenmuir—Escape of Lord Nithisdale—Charles XII. of Sweden—War with Spain—Septennial Act—South Sea Bubble.

GEORGE I., the new king, who was now proclaimed in virtue of the act which limited the succession to the Protestant descendants of the late Kings of England, excluding all Roman Catholics from the throne, was the grandson of Elizabeth, sister to King Charles I. and great grandson to James I. He arrived in England a few weeks after the death of Queen Anne ;—the Whig party once more came into power, and the



ESCAPE OF LORD NITHSDALE.

Duke of Marlborough was restored to his former post of Commander-in-Chief.

The new king was not likely to be very popular in England. He had never been in this country before, spoke not a word of the language, and had as little sympathy for his new subjects as they had for him. But the preservation of liberty was considered more important than anything; and the English were ready to sacrifice a great many points, rather than run the risk of again losing what it had cost them so much to achieve.

Some of the king's advisers also induced him to behave very harshly to the chiefs of the Tory party; and to this cause, among others, is owing the fact that in the next year, 1715, an attempt was made in the north to put the Pretender, the son of James II., on the throne.

This attempt was called the "Rebellion of 1715." It was a miserable affair from the beginning, and cost several brave noblemen their lives. The Earl of Mar raised the standard of revolt, and the Highland clans, who knew no law but the will of their chiefs, came flocking together until a very respectable force was collected; but the Highlanders could not hope to succeed in their enterprise without aid from the Jacobites in England; and just at this time Louis XIV. of France died. He had been the consistent friend of the exiled Stuarts, and had helped them more than once in their attempts to regain their lost power in England; so that his death discouraged them greatly.

The insurgents were divided into two bodies. One marched southwards as far as Preston, where they surrendered after a short resistance. The Duke of Argyle fought an indecisive battle at Sheriffmuir against the body which remained in Scotland; and when all hopes of success were past, the Pretender, or, as his adherents called him, the Chevalier, arrived in Scotland. He stayed for a few days at Perth, and then left the kingdom, leaving his deluded followers to pay the price of his rash attempt.

The Government took a cruel revenge on the defeated rebels, and the king seemed very little inclined to exercise his prerogative of mercy. Many of the insurgents were hanged at Tyburn and elsewhere; and Lords Derwentwater, Kenmuir, Nithisdale, and others were condemned to die on the scaffold. Kenmuir and Derwentwater perished. Lord

Nithisdale effected his escape from the Tower, and from England, the very day before his intended execution, by means of the heroism and cleverness of his wife. Lady Nithisdale persuaded her husband to put on her cloak when she visited him in prison; and while she remained behind in the dungeon, he passed out, unsuspected by warders and sentinels, holding a white handkerchief before his face as if he were overwhelmed with grief.

There were threatenings of war with the hot-headed King of Sweden, Charles XII., on account of some part of Charles's territory which had been awarded to King George I. as Elector of Hanover; but the King of Sweden was killed at the siege of Fredericshall, in Norway, and the danger passed away.

In 1718 and 1719 a war was carried on against Spain, chiefly caused by the intrigues of Alberoni, the ambitious minister of the Spanish king, who formed a scheme for restoring the Pretender to the throne of Britain. A small Spanish force actually landed in Scotland, but the invaders were soon captured, and the expedition ended in complete failure. Admiral George Byng had gained a great victory over the Spanish fleet off Cape Pessaro, near Sicily; and, in the end, the Spanish king was very glad to obtain peace, and the ambitious Alberoni was dismissed. These wars cost a great deal of money.

It was settled in this reign that a new Parliament should not be called every three years, but that each might last for seven years; and this measure, called the Septennial Act, is still in force.

King George I. lived on very bad terms with his eldest son, the Prince of Wales; and the quarrel between them at last reached such a height, that the prince was expelled from court. In 1720 occurred a national calamity, known by the name of the "South Sea Bubble," by which many people were ruined. A speculator named Blunt pretended that great advantages were to be derived from trading to the great South Sea or Pacific Ocean. Many people were induced to pay a great deal of money for shares in the South Sea Company; and when, in course of time, it came out that the great profits did not really exist, but that dishonest men had been practising upon the credulity of all who believed them, the anger of those who had been cheated was very great. In France

a similar deception, called the “Mississippi Scheme,” was practised about the same time.

The most prominent statesman during the latter years of the reign of George I. was Sir Robert Walpole, who afterwards became the most powerful man in England.

In June, 1727, while the king, who had passed his sixty-eighth year, was on his way to Hanover, he was suddenly taken ill in his travelling carriage. He was carried on to Osnaburgh, where he died. His wife, Dorothea of Zell, whom he had kept a prisoner for many years in the German castle of Ahlden, on an accusation that was never proved against her, had died the year before; and now the Prince of Wales came to the throne as George II.

## CHAPTER II.

### GEORGE II.

Sir Robert Walpole—His system of corruption—Queen Caroline—Fall of Walpole—Joy of the people on the declaration of war—Walpole’s remark thereon—Commodore Anson—General discontent—Battle of Dettingen—Bravery of the King—Defeat of the English at Fontenoy.

WHEN the new king came to the throne, Sir Robert Walpole, of whom mention was made in the last chapter, was the most influential man in England. Of his great talents there can be no doubt; but he gained his objects by unworthy means, and was satisfied to bribe the members of the House of Commons into acquiescence in his measures, instead of trying to persuade them to help him for the love of their country and of the right. He was accustomed to say that every man had his price—meaning that no man could resist a bribe if it were only large enough; and, with such an example at the head of the State, we cannot wonder that bribery, corruption, and selfishness increased in England to a terrible degree.

George II. was very fortunate in possessing a sensible, judicious wife. Queen Caroline, a German princess, was of great use to the king by her advice and assistance in affairs of State; and her death, in 1736, was looked upon as a great misfortune by the country in general.

For a long time the nation remained at peace; and whatever may have been the faults of Walpole, there is no denying that the ship of the State was steered with consummate ability while this great statesman stood at the helm; but at last his enemies were too strong for him, and he was removed from his position of first minister. The English seemed to have grown weary of the long peace, and to be anxious to try their strength and skill again in a general war; and soon they had it with a vengeance, more than they desired. When, in 1739, war was declared against Spain, on the pretext, partly true and partly false, that insults had been offered to the British flag, the Londoners rang the bells of the churches, as if the breaking out of strife was a thing to rejoice at. "They are ringing the bells now," said Walpole, bitterly, when he saw all his schemes of peaceful progress overthrown, "but soon they will be wringing their hands." And Walpole spoke the truth.

Porto Bello, one of the Spanish settlements in South America, was taken; but beyond this the English gained little advantage from the strife, except the acquisition of a treasure of above £300,000, arising from the capture of a treasure-ship by the brave Commodore Anson, who made a voyage round the world in his gallant old vessel, the "Centurion," and brought this rich prize home with him. But, in 1741, an unsuccessful attack was made on Carthage; and the failure of this attempt was visited upon Walpole, the very man who had tried to prevent the war as long as he could. The country was also dragged into a foreign war, which broke out in 1740, between Maria Theresa, Empress of Germany, and Frederick the Great, King of Prussia; and much blood and treasure were wasted in supporting the claims of the Empress-Queen, with which the English declared that they had nothing to do; and a general feeling of discontent arose, increasing steadily as the taxation became heavier. Nor were there wanting many, among the Tory party especially, who declared that we had paid too high a price for the Protestant succession; that the rule of a king who involved Britain in

foreign warfare because he happened to be Elector of Hanover was an unbearable grievance; and that it would be far better to go back to the old Stuart line, and accept the Pretender as King of England. This feeling was in some degree counteracted by the natural admiration excited by the personal conduct of the king in this contest. King George II. was a brave little gentleman, who led his army into the field and shared the dangers of the campaign right gallantly; and when the battle of Dettingen was fought, in 1742, and the British and Hanoverian troops, led by the king in person, gained an advantage, the English rejoiced at the success of their arms, and were ready for some time to shout for the brave king, and to join in the hymn of triumph written by the great musician Handel to celebrate the victory. But this state of feeling did not last long. When the nation became involved in a struggle against France, on account of the king's partisanship with Germany, the feeling against him returned, and grew stronger than ever when the news came to England that the British Guards had been defeated, in spite of the most heroic valour, at the battle of Fontenoy, on the 11th of March, 1745.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE REIGN OF GEORGE II. CONCLUDED.

Rebellion of 1745—The Young Pretender—Charles Edward and Lochiel—His partial successes—Utter defeat—Cruelties towards the rebels—Escape of Charles Edward—Treaty of Aix la Chapelle—Robert Clive founds the British empire in India—Admiral Byng—General Wolfe's success in Canada—Death of George II.

THE general discontent against the Government in England made the Jacobites, or the adherents of the exiled Stuarts, think that now was the time to strike another blow, and endeavour to establish the Pretender on the English throne. Accordingly, a last great attempt was made, which is generally known in history as the insurrection of 1745, and is sometimes in shorter terms described as "the '45." The Pretender, the





GEORGE II. AT DETTINGEN.

son of James II., was now an elderly man. Even in his best days he had never been remarkable for talent or energy, and in the rising of 1715 had, as my readers will remember, delayed his arrival in Scotland until the cause was lost. But the eldest son of the Pretender, Prince Charles Edward, the *Young Chevalier*, as his adherents delighted to call him, was very brave, handsome, and popular; and this Charles Edward determined, against the advice of his best friends, to invade Scotland with whatever help he could obtain, in the hope that the Scottish chiefs, and afterwards the English malcontents, would give him their assistance. In a small French brig of war, the "Doutelle," with arms for a couple of thousand men and a scanty supply of money, Prince Charles Edward landed on the coast of Inverness. Lochiel, the brave chief of the Cameron clan, hearing of his arrival, came to remonstrate with him on the rashness of the enterprise, and to persuade him, if possible, to return to France. But as the prince and Lochiel walked to and fro, the prince arguing and Lochiel remonstrating, a Highlander who had accompanied his chief caught a few words of the conversation, enough to convince him *who* it was that spoke thus excitedly to Lochiel. Instantly the brave Highlander's cheek reddened with enthusiasm. His eye glistened, and his hand moved involuntarily towards his claymore. Prince Edward noted the gesture, and, advancing towards the mountaineer, said, "*You would fight for your prince, if he came to solicit your aid?*" "*That I would! that I would!*" replied the Highlander, warmly; and Lochiel, ashamed of being outdone in loyalty by one of his own clansmen, in an evil hour promised the prince all the countenance and help he could give.

Other chiefs quickly joined the Chevalier's standard; and, as the clansmen invariably followed wherever their chiefs led them, every time the prince gained a chief to his cause he won the entire clan over whom that chief ruled. Thus Charles Edward was soon enabled to begin his march southward with 2,000 hardy Highlanders. He entered Edinburgh unopposed, and his little army swelled from day to day. On the 20th of September, 1745, he encountered the forces of Sir John Cope at Preston Pans, near Edinburgh; and here he gained a complete victory. The English troops were soon scampering or galloping away from the



THE YOUNG PRETENDER CONCEALED IN A CAVE.

field, and their leader, Sir John, headed the flight. Elated by this victory, the prince marched southward, and invaded England. Carlisle was taken, and then Manchester. Edward penetrated as far south as Derby, and great was the panic in London when news came that the wild Highlanders intended to take the city. But the enthusiasm of some of Charles's followers had cooled when they saw how few of the English joined them. A council of the chiefs was held at Derby, and it was determined to retreat to Scotland. A picked army under the Duke of Cumberland followed them, and on Culloden Moor, near Inverness, on the 16th of April, 1746, the army of the Pretender was utterly destroyed. His forces had already dwindled down to 5,000 men, and of these a thousand were left dead upon the field. The fugitives were pursued and massacred with unrelenting cruelty by the Duke of Cumberland's troops, who, moreover, penetrated far into the Highlands, laying villages waste, and desolating the country for many miles. The insurgents who were captured received no mercy. Numbers were put to death; many more perished in prison, or were transported beyond the seas. The Lords Kilmarnock, Balmerino, and Lovat were executed on Tower Hill. The prince himself wandered about the Highlands many months, faithfully hidden by the mountaineers, though a great price had been set on his head. At last he found means to escape to France. This was the last attempt made in Great Britain to restore the Stuarts. The prince survived till 1788, and his younger brother Henry till 1809; but the unhappy issue of "the '45" had convinced all sensible men that the day of the Stuarts in England was past.

In 1748 a general peace was concluded between France and England, at Aix la Chapelle. This was chiefly brought about by the naval victories gained by Admirals Hawke and Anson in 1747.

The last years of George II.'s reign were years of brilliant success in the colonies. In India the British rule was founded by Robert Clive, who went out as a writer in the East India Company's service, but soon showed wonderful military talents. He gained the battle of Plassey, the first of a series of great victories in India; and before he died he had established the English rule in that great empire. War broke out again with France in 1756. Admiral Byng was sent into the Mediterranean



## DEATH OF GEORGE II.—GEORGE III.

to operate against the enemy; but he neglected to put forth his whole strength, and on his return to England was accused of cowardice, and actually condemned to death and shot on board a man-of-war in Portsmouth harbour. In Canada, on the other hand, the English were successful. The brave General Wolfe captured Quebec, where he was slain in the moment of victory; and the whole province soon fell into the hands of the English. This was in 1759; and in the following year, amid general success and prosperity, George II. died.

## CHAPTER IV.

### GEORGE III.

(FIRST PERIOD—FROM 1760 TO 1783.)

Accession of George III.—His injudicious education—His character—He obtains the affections of his subjects—The Earl of Chatham—Lord Bute—Treaty of Paris—The American War of Independence—George Washington—The United States recognized as an independent Power.

WE now come to speak of the longest reign in English history—the reign of a king whom some people yet living remember to have seen, a blind old man, in the lordly castle of Windsor: a reign that saw more chances and changes at home and abroad than any other recorded in the annals of England. The sixty years during which King George sat on the throne of Great Britain were very eventful, and witnessed the rise and fall of more than one mighty empire. Indeed, so full of strange matter is this long reign, that we can only glance at the chief facts; for a detailed account of the period would fill many volumes larger than this. George III., who came to the throne on the death of George II., was the grandson of the late king, and the eldest son of Frederick, Prince of Wales, who had died nine years before. He was twenty-two years of age when his grandfather's death made him king of the British empire. He had been educated under the eye of his mother, the dowager Princess

of Wales, who had given him very lofty notions of the kingly power; and these notions, as we shall see, at various times interfered with the good feeling that should have subsisted between the king and his subjects. But he was an Englishman in heart and soul, and in this respect differed from his two predecessors, the first of whom had positively disliked the British, while the other, to say the least, preferred Hanover to England. He was obstinate and self-willed, and had not a very enlarged mind; but, on the other hand, he was thoroughly honest in all he said and did; he soon convinced all classes of his subjects that he had the honour and prosperity of his country truly at heart; and, more important than all, he led a decent Christian life (while the first and second Georges had been steeped in immorality and vice). He thoroughly felt what a great trust he held in being called to the government of the great British empire; and with all the strength that had been given him, with his whole heart and soul, he feared and worshipped God. Thus his people, whose hearts had never turned very warmly towards the two first Georges, came in course of time to look with a very different feeling upon the third: they were angry sometimes at his errors of judgment, and impatient when the prosperity of the nation seemed to be endangered by the obstinacy of its ruler, but they could not help seeing with what honesty of purpose he ruled, and how anxious he was for the general good; and before many years of his reign had elapsed, they gave him the title which should be more valuable to a ruler than the epithet *great*—they called him the *good* King George.

At the accession of the new king, the most powerful man in the Government was William Pitt, who afterwards became Earl of Chatham. In his younger days this Pitt had been a great opponent of Sir Robert Walpole, and had thundered with mighty eloquence against bribery and corruption. His is the merit of having introduced a better and purer feeling into the Parliament, for he endeavoured to rule England, not by bribery or cajoling the Lords and Commons as Walpole had done, but by convincing them that his measures were *right*, and that because they were right they must be carried into effect. During the last year of George II. this William Pitt—the Great Commoner, as he was called—had been the chief minister of the crown. He it was who appointed the

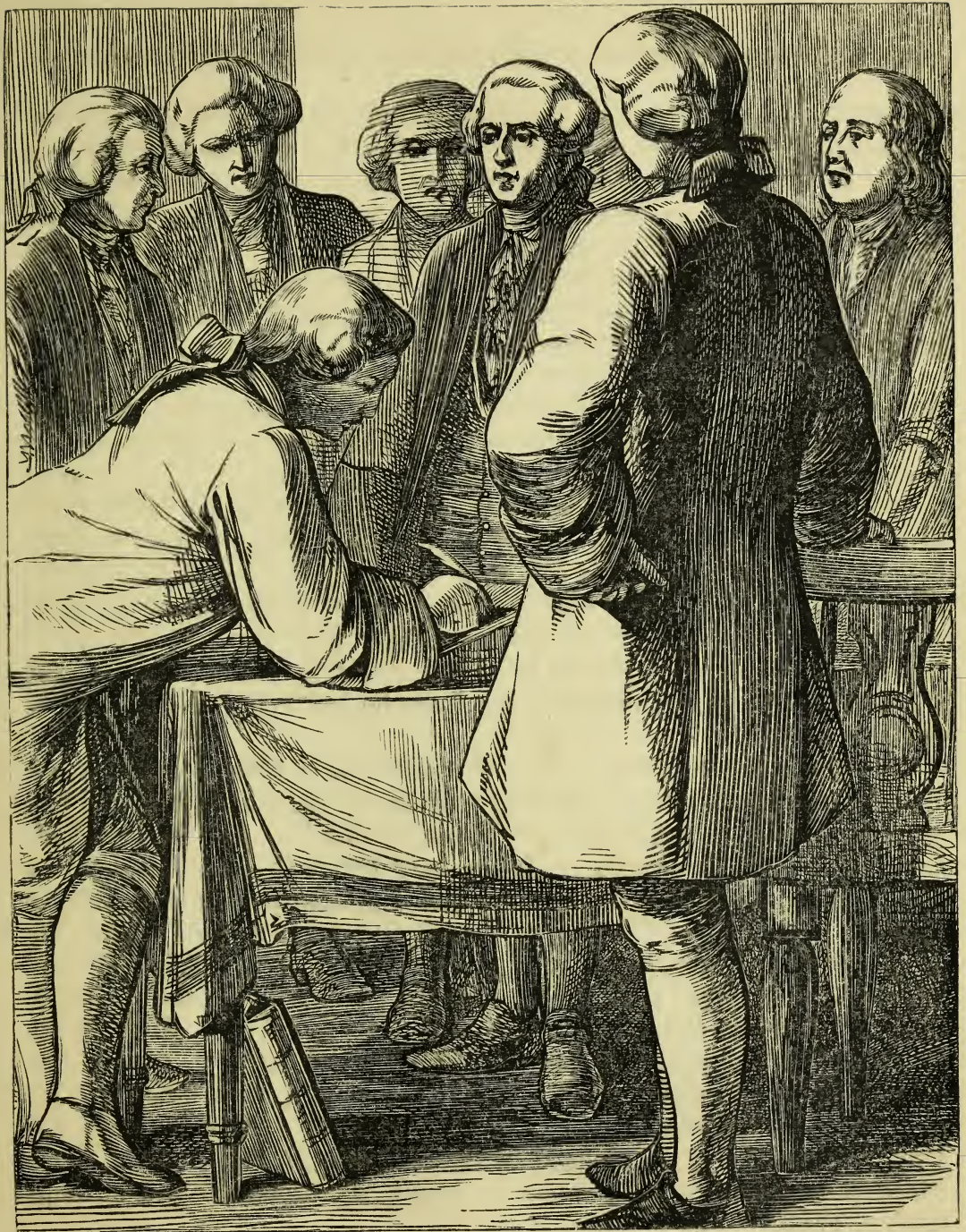
heroic Wolfe to the command of the army in Canada, and the English people had full confidence in him; but George III. had a favourite in the person of Lord Bute, a Scottish nobleman; and Pitt lost his influence, and withdrew from his high post; whereupon Bute became first minister to the crown. Bute attempted to carry out some harsh measures, and these excited much discontent; but the war against Spain was carried on with success, until concluded by the Treaty of Paris in 1763; and this kept the people in good humour for a time.

We have now to speak of a very important event—an event which resulted in a long and disastrous war, and the loss of a large portion of British territory. This event was the quarrel between England and the colony of America.

The North American colonies had now been established for about 140 years. They had become very prosperous, and had always been loyally attached to the mother country. During the Canadian war they had assisted the English Home Government to the best of their ability, and a thoroughly good understanding had always been maintained. But now the English Government was in great want of money. The late wars had been very glorious, but very expensive; and the king's ministers conceived the unfortunate idea of taxing the colonies, saying that the Americans ought to bear their share of the national expenses.

The Americans protested against being made to pay taxes. They declared that as in England no tax could be levied without the consent of Parliament, they ought not to be taxed without being represented by members of their own; and when the English Government insisted on laying a duty on tea, some rioters in Boston emptied the cargoes of two ships into the harbour, rather than suffer the taxed tea to be sold. A number of the most clear-sighted among the English saw plainly that the Government was doing a foolish thing in rousing the American colonists to anger and resistance. The great William Pitt especially protested in the strongest terms against the measures of the Government; but the king and his advisers were obstinate, and insisted on treating the Americans as rebels. Some severe laws were passed, with the idea of frightening them into submission; but the colonists were not to be frightened; harshness only made them more stubborn in their resistance. At





SIGNING THE TREATY OF PEACE WITH AMERICA.

last an unfortunate skirmish occurred between some British troops and American volunteers at Lexington, and this was followed by a regular battle at Bunker's Hill, on the 17th of June, 1775. The king was more angry than ever, and would make no concessions; the Americans were exasperated likewise; and on the 4th of July, 1776, their Congress, or State Council, signed a declaration of independence, constituting the colonies a separate empire, under the name of the "United States"—and thus began the great American War of Independence.

For years both sides fought very valiantly, and at one time it seemed as if the colonies would be subdued. But the Americans had secured a general-in-chief of great ability, and equal honesty of purpose, in the person of George Washington. This great man excited the admiration even of his enemies by the glorious manner in which he fulfilled the great duty entrusted to him. Never despondent in danger, never haughty or overbearing in victory, his sole wish was the greatness of his country, his sole aim to achieve her independence; and at length, when the great struggle was finished and the United States had been established, he laid down the command he had held, and cheerfully retired, content with the position of a private citizen in the State he had mainly contributed to found.

Sometimes the Americans were successful for a time, sometimes the English gained advantages; but the most far-seeing men in England had no doubt from the beginning what the end would be. The Earl of Chatham openly told the king's ministers, long before the conclusion of the war, "British troops can do anything but impossibilities; and to conquer America is an impossibility. You cannot conquer America." And the great earl's words proved true. Already in 1777 the British General Burgoyne was obliged to surrender, with his whole army, to the American General Gates, at Saratoga; in the next year the French allied themselves with the Americans, and the English had to fight against two enemies instead of one; in 1781 Lord Cornwallis, a brave English commander, was compelled to yield; and in 1782 the independence of the United States was acknowledged by Great Britain. The treaty of peace which put an end to the war was at length signed on the 3rd of September, 1783.

## CHAPTER V.

### GEORGE III.

(SECOND PERIOD—FROM 1783 TO 1802.)

Warren Hastings—The French Revolution and its causes—The Bastille—Execution of the French King and Queen—The Reign of Terror—War declared against France—The British Navy and its great commanders—Nelson—Victories—Napoleon Bonaparte—He becomes supreme in France—Rebellion in Ireland—The Union—Wellington.

It will be remembered that at the end of George II.'s reign Robert Clive had founded a great power in India. Until that time the East India Company had been merely an association of merchants trading to the East, but the genius and fortune of Clive had given them an empire there, and made them kings where they had been only traders. After the return of Clive to England, Warren Hastings, a clever, bold man, had been sent out by the Company as the first Governor-General of India; and it was declared that Hastings had dealt unjustly with the natives, punishing them cruelly, extorting large sums of money from them, and oppressing them in various ways. Accordingly in 1784 Warren Hastings was summoned before the British Parliament, to take his trial for high crimes and misdemeanours. The trial itself did not commence for four years, and then it dragged on for seven years more, until, in 1795, Hastings was acquitted. That he had committed many unjust actions there can be no doubt; but, on the other hand, the government of India was a very difficult task; and Hastings seems in general to have done his best to please all parties, and thus succeeded in pleasing none.

The Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV., now began to cause his father serious anxiety, especially by his reckless extravagance. The nation was obliged to pay his debts, and to allow him a large sum of money; consequently for a long time the prince was not very popular in England.

The affairs of France had been going on very badly for a long time. The people were grievously oppressed, and could obtain neither law nor justice. The taxes were enormous, and so unequally divided that the poorer classes had to pay nearly the whole amount, the nobles and rich clergy being almost entirely free. A deep and dangerous hatred towards the Government had been silently increasing for very many years; but the upper classes had been so accustomed to exact slavish obedience from those beneath them, that they despised the people, and continued in their wrongdoing, never thinking that a terrible day of reckoning would come. The misery in France grew greater day by day. Many a poor peasant perished of starvation, leaving his wretched wife and children to follow him, and still the nobility and clergy feasted and rioted in Paris and at their *chateaux* in the country. They have been aptly compared to a company dancing on the edge of a volcano, which might at any time burst out into flame and destroy them. They regarded not the signs of the times, but went on fiddling and feasting until the time came when the poor could endure no more.

For in 1789 the memorable French Revolution broke out. The King, Louis XVI., a well-meaning but miserably weak and inefficient man, was compelled to summon the Parliament or States-General; for the people would no longer pay the taxes. The Queen, Marie Antoinette, and a number of the nobility were for putting all discontent down by force; another faction counselled the king to appease the people by reforming some of the abuses in the State; and the weak king listened sometimes to one side, and sometimes to the other, but did nothing till it was too late. The people in Paris and in some of the provinces began to create disturbances. The Bastille, a strong prison in which the Kings of France had shut up those who offended them, was attacked and destroyed. The king tried to escape from France with his family, but was brought back and imprisoned in his own capital; and at length, in the beginning of the year 1793, he was brought to trial, as Charles I. had been in England nearly a century and a half before. He perished on the scaffold, his head being cut off by means of a machine called the guillotine; and in the same year the beautiful Queen Marie Antoinette was also put to death. Then followed a period called the "Reign of

Terror” in France. A few worthless and violent men now governed the country, putting to death all who opposed them, or were even suspected of being unfriendly to the Republic which they had established. The guillotine was hard at work every day in Paris and in the large cities of France. Thousands of the nobility and many of the lower classes were decapitated, and the faction at the head of the Government, Robespierre, Marat, and a few other desperate men, thought to maintain themselves in power by the terror they inspired.

The whole of Europe was filled with horror and disgust at the scenes enacted in France. Nearly every European nation, England included, declared war against the French Republic. But the French were not to be dismayed by all the preparations made against them. They defied their enemies; and their armies marched forth from France to fight for their country. The “Reign of Terror” could not last long, for no man’s life was safe under its sway. The chiefs of the Terrorists were put to death, and a more reasonable set of men succeeded them; and to the astonishment of Europe it was found that France, standing alone against her enemies, could not only defend her own soil, but actually carry the war into the lands of her opponents. In this first war against France, which lasted until the year 1802, a great deal of money was spent by the English Government. William Pitt, son of the great Earl of Chatham, was for many years the chief minister of George III., and managed to carry the English nation through the war without disgrace, though at a tremendous cost. He has been called “the pilot who weathered the storm.” His abilities were great and his honesty undoubted, though in some of the measures he took he has been considered ill-advised by later politicians.

The Duke of York, son of George III., was made commander of the land forces. He effected little against the enemy, and was at last obliged to return to England, after losing many men and spending much money. But at sea the British arms were crowned with success and glory. Great victories were gained by the brave English admirals, and the empire of the sea remained in the hands of the British, while the French were defeating all opponents on land. Among the great names of naval commanders who shed a lustre on this period must be mentioned those of

Hood, Duncan, Howe, St. Vincent, and Rodney; but the greatest of all was Horatio Nelson.

This illustrious man was the son of a country clergyman. He was so weak and sickly as a boy, that when he was first sent on board a king's ship as midshipman, the captain pitied him, thinking that the puny little stripling would never be able to endure the hardships of a sailor's life. But weak as he was in body, Horatio had a noble soul. He knew not what fear was; but he knew what the word *Duty* meant. He knew that it must be begun early, persevered in unflinchingly, and done thoroughly; and from the time when he entered on board his first ship, a frail, weakly lad, until that glorious and mournful day when he fell in the fight that crushed his country's enemies, *Duty* was the guiding-star of Nelson's life. He followed it among the snowy perils of an arctic voyage; he remembered it when he lay sick almost to death in the unhealthy heat of the tropics; and when at last he lay dying in the cockpit of his ship, the "Victory," amid the thunder of the great battle of Trafalgar, he solemnly thanked God for the glorious opportunity that had been given him of *doing his duty*. And therefore it is that the name of Nelson is known and honoured throughout all the world, as that of a truly great and noble man, who devoted his time, health, and strength to the honour of his country.

Of the many naval successes gained by the British during this first period of the war, ending in 1802, were—the battle of Camperdown, fought against the Dutch (who had taken part with the French) by Admiral Hood, on the 11th of October, 1797; the victory of Admiral Sir John Jervis (afterwards Lord St. Vincent) off Cape St. Vincent, in Spain, in February of the same year; and the grand battle of the Nile, on the coast of Egypt, gained by Sir Horatio Nelson on the 1st of August, 1798. Nelson had already rendered signal service to his country on many occasions. He had been mainly instrumental in winning the battle of St. Vincent; he had lost an arm and an eye in his country's service; and had become the idol of the sailors, who admired him for his courage, but loved him for the generosity with which he refused to accept any preference over them. At the Nile he was wounded again: the sailors carried him down into the cockpit of his ship, the place where

the surgeons were at work dressing the hurts of the gallant men who had been maimed by the shot and shell that swept like a hail-storm over the blood-stained decks. The surgeons, hearing that the admiral was hit, were anxiously coming forward to attend to him; but "No," said Nelson, "I will take my turn with my poor fellows." We can imagine what a murmur of admiration ran round the dark cockpit at these noble words, and how there was not a British sailor in that dark abode of anguish and suffering who did not feel proud to die in the company of Nelson. A terrible blow was given to the French by this battle; and Nelson was raised to the peerage, under the title of Baron Nelson of the Nile.

These victories at sea were the more important from the astonishing successes the French were gaining on land. There was in the French army which marched to the south to besiege the revolted city of Toulon, a young Corsican, an officer of artillery, named Napoleon Bonaparte; and at the siege it soon became manifest that the young captain knew his work better than the veteran general who commanded could teach it him. So greatly did he impress those around him with respect for his military genius, that the command of an army was soon entrusted to him for the invasion of Italy, then held by the Austrians; and in Italy Bonaparte gained victory after victory, so that in 1797 the Austrians were obliged to make peace with France on terms very disadvantageous to themselves. Bonaparte was of a very fiery temper; and when, during the negotiations, the Austrian envoys hesitated to grant some of his demands, he seized a valuable vase that stood near, dashed it to the ground, and, pointing to the scattered fragments, exclaimed, "Thus will I dash down your empire!" In the next year the general, whose name was now known and respected throughout France, embarked an army at Toulon, crossed the Mediterranean, and invaded Egypt. Here he gained victory after victory; but Nelson's splendid success of the Nile prevented Bonaparte from achieving the conquest of Egypt; and in 1799 he secretly quitted that country and returned to France.

Bonaparte was now the foremost man in France. On his return to the capital he turned out the kind of Parliament which was nominally at the head of affairs, much as Cromwell had turned out the Long Parliament in England. He thereupon became Consul of France, two com-

panions, Siéyès and Ducos, being elected to form a kind of triumvirate (or government of three) with him; but the real power was in the hands of Bonaparte himself. The British made another attempt before Holland under the Duke of York; but the duke was not a successful nor a very able general, and the enterprize ended in failure.

In 1798 an unhappy rebellion broke out in Ireland, and was not suppressed until much blood had been shed. In 1801 Ireland was united to England, as Scotland had been in the year 1706, the separate Parliament of Ireland being dissolved, and a certain number of members appointed to the English Parliament, to represent the Irish nation.

While the French were rejoicing in the successes of their General Bonaparte, a great English captain, destined at a future period to protect England against his power, was greatly distinguishing himself in the East. Colonel Wellesley, who afterwards became the famous Duke of Wellington, was extending the rule of the British in India, where he gained the victories of Argaum and Assaye. But the greatest achievement was the storming of Seringapatam, the capital of Mysore, in 1799.

A new triumph was gained by Nelson at Copenhagen on the 20th of April, 1801. The Danes had taken part with the French, and it became necessary to strike a blow in the Baltic, to prevent the destruction of the English commerce there. During the battle the English fleet was at one time in great danger. Nelson, who was only second in command, had, with his usual bravery, led his division so far forward that his chief, Sir Hyde Parker, thought it prudent to make a signal to recall him; but Nelson, clapping a spy-glass to his *blind* eye, declared that he could not see the signal, and went on fighting till he had beaten the foe.

Thus from one end of Europe to the other there was war and bloodshed, partly caused by the ambition of Bonaparte, who wished to extend the dominion of France over the whole continent, partly, no doubt, by the conduct of the Powers of Europe, who were determined to restore the Bourbons to the French throne, whether the French people liked them or no. At last, in 1801, the French were driven out of Egypt; and as all parties were completely exhausted by the struggle, they began to think of peace. A treaty was concluded at Amiens in France. The conditions were decidedly in favour of the French, who had greatly increased their





STORMING OF SERINGAPATAM.

dominions, while England had loaded herself with a heavy debt, and gained little beyond glory and honour. Britain was not satisfied with the treaty; and France, or rather Napoleon Bonaparte, who now represented France, concluded it only to gain breathing-time. A peace made under such circumstances is very apt to be broken; and the Treaty of Amiens was no exception to the general rule.

## PART X. THE PRESENT CENTURY.

### CHAPTER I.

#### GEORGE III.

(THIRD PERIOD—FROM 1802 TO 1820.)

Progress of English commerce—Suffering in the country—The King's illness—The Prince Regent—His unpopularity—Patriotism of the English—War again breaks out—Napoleon becomes Emperor—Battle of Trafalgar—Death of Nelson—The Peninsular War.

DURING the warlike time we have just been describing, while Europe was filled with battle and bloodshed, the trade and commerce of England had gone on steadily increasing. Indeed, the very necessities of the war led to a demand for goods of certain kinds, such as arms and ammunition; and nothing but the increased commerce of the empire could have enabled England to stand the tremendous expense to which she was put. There was much suffering among the people, and consequently not a little discontent; but still the nation remained loyal and faithful to the good old king, whom they respected for his honesty and for his homely virtues; and Queen Charlotte, his consort, had her full share of the

popular affection. Unfortunately, the king had once been attacked by a terrible fit of insanity, and it was greatly feared that this malady might come back upon him, perhaps with increased violence; and the Prince of Wales was far less popular than good old "Farmer George." The prince had married the Princess Caroline of Brunswick, and they had an only daughter, the Princess Charlotte, who was much beloved by the people, and who, it was hoped, would one day sit upon the throne of England; but the Prince and Princess of Wales lived very unhappily together, and at last the princess quitted England, and went to reside abroad.

There were then, as there had been for centuries, two parties in England. At the head of the Tories stood the great William Pitt, who thought that the safety of Britain could only be secured by vigorously maintaining the war against Bonaparte; while Charles Fox, the head of the Whig party, considered it would be better for the interests of the country to be friendly with the French nation if possible. But though the views of these two great men differed on almost every point, both were eager to maintain the honour of their country. The people of the United Kingdom showed a good spirit; and when danger threatened the country many thousands of volunteers enrolled themselves into a great army, to defend the shores of their country against any attempt at invasion. This good quality of the English character has often been made manifest in the course of our history. Whatever quarrels might disturb the peace at home, at the first rumour of invasion from abroad our countrymen have always shown themselves ready to come forward, and stand shoulder to shoulder in defence of the throne against foreign aggression or interference.

The Peace of Amiens soon came to an end. Bonaparte had now been elected Consul for life, and was all-powerful on the continent. He knew that England looked with anger and jealousy at his tremendous power, and consequently made preparations to invade this country at the first opportunity. This fact was well known, and it increased the determination of the English to resist him to the last. War broke out again in 1803, and a great alliance was formed between England, Russia, Austria, and Sweden; for the nations hoped that by uniting together they might

stop the haughty Corsican's career. William Pitt was now once more at the head of the English Government. He trusted by this coalition to crush Bonaparte, and spared no expense to effect his object. The French, on the other hand, had unbounded faith in their leader; and in 1804 Bonaparte was crowned Emperor of the French, under the title of Napoleon I.; so now we shall have to speak of him in future as the Emperor Napoleon.

If the French nation had full trust in the genius of their ruler, that ruler was not wanting in confidence in himself. He assembled a mighty army, and turned his arms first against Austria. An Austrian army under General Mack yielded disgracefully at Ulm. Napoleon entered Vienna as a conqueror, and on the 2nd of December, 1805, inflicted a tremendous defeat on the united power of the Russians and Austrians at Austerlitz. This great success of Napoleon's paralyzed the efforts of the coalition, and broke the mighty heart of Pitt, who died of grief and disappointment in the beginning of the year 1806. In that year also Napoleon gained other great victories over the Prussians and Russians at Jena, Eylau, and Friedland. Charles Fox, the great rival of Pitt, died in September, 1806, and the affairs of Napoleon's opponents looked very gloomy.

One glorious triumph, however, had been achieved by Nelson in his last sea fight on the 21st of October, 1805. On that memorable day was fought the battle of Trafalgar against the united fleets of France and Spain. The enemy's fleet was completely destroyed; but in the moment of triumph the great English admiral fell pierced by a French bullet on the quarter-deck of his own flag-ship the "Victory," and died a few hours afterwards, happy in having done "his duty," and rescued his country from a great danger. Nelson lies buried in the crypt of St. Paul's Cathedral; and many years afterwards, when the great war had become a thing of the past, the mighty captain who upheld the honour of England by land, as Nelson had maintained it on the seas, was laid to sleep by his side; and in the heart of the city of London, amid the people whose independence they fought so nobly to maintain, NELSON and WELLINGTON rest together.

Napoleon's arrogance now passed all bounds. He established one of



## THE PENINSULAR WAR.

his brothers, Louis, as King of Holland; another, Joseph, became King of Spain; to a third, Jerome, was given the newly-erected kingdom of Westphalia in Germany; while the soldier Murat, who had married the French emperor's sister, was made King of Naples. Portugal alone refused to submit to the victor; and it was determined that England should assist that country in maintaining her independence, and, if possible, reconquer Spain, whose people detested Napoleon, though her Government had submitted to him; and for this great object was undertaken the celebrated contest in Spain and Portugal, famous in history as the PENINSULAR WAR.

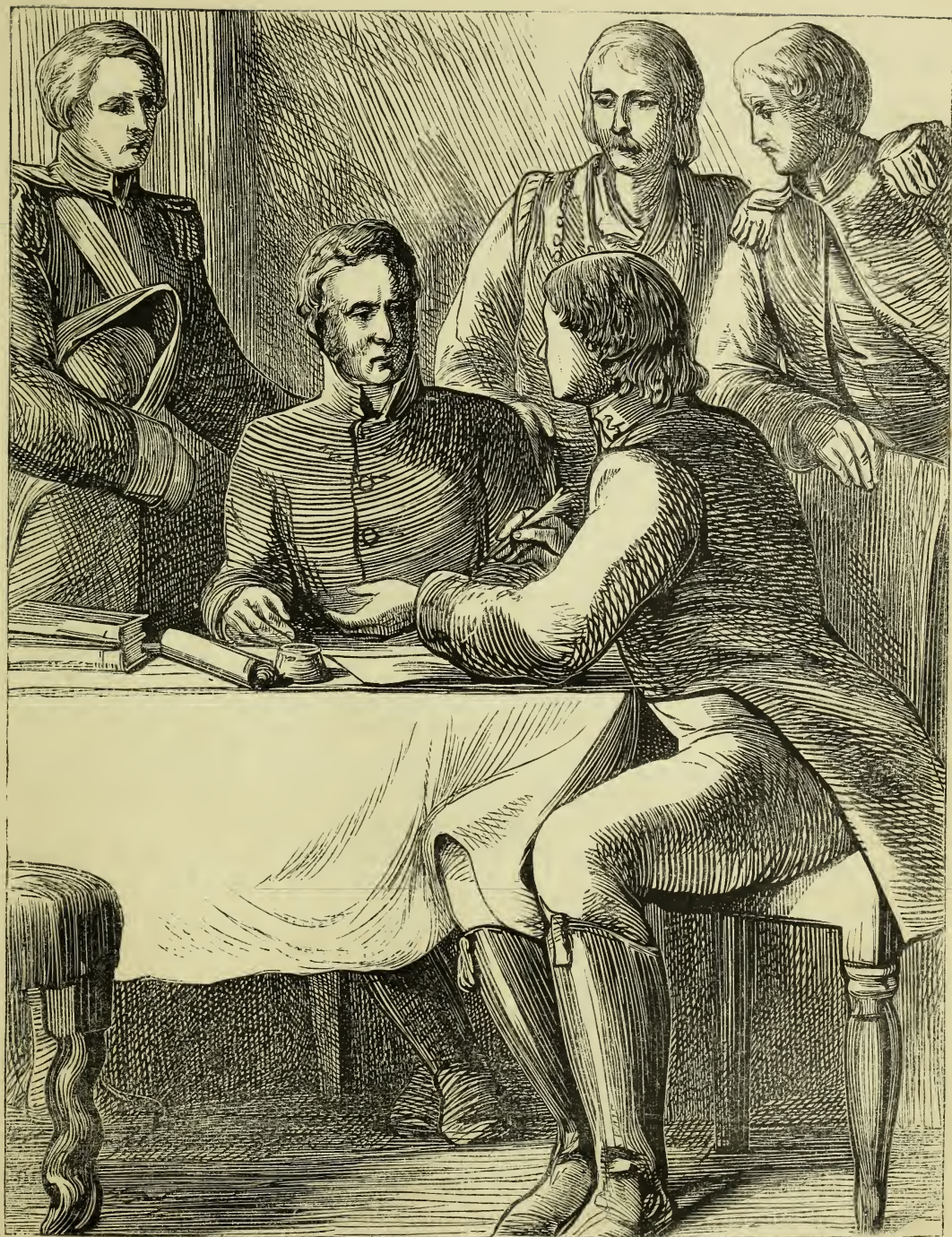
## CHAPTER II.

### GEORGE III.

(THE THIRD PERIOD, CONCLUDED.)

Sir Arthur Wellesley in the peninsula—His successes—Sir John Moore—Napoleon's divorce—His invasion of Russia—Battle of Leipsic—Bonaparte banished to Elba—Visit of the Allies to England—Insanity of the King—War with America—Napoleon's escape from Elba—Battle of Waterloo—Napoleon banished to St. Helena—Death of George III.

SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY was the great hero of the Peninsular War; and never did general show greater power of daring, combined with consummate prudence, greater promptitude to act, joined to all requisite patience to wait, than were displayed by that immortal Englishman during the memorable contest. Sir Arthur had to conduct his operations under almost every disadvantage. The ministry at home was feeble and timid, and frequently left him without supplies, so that the army was more than once half starved. The regular Spanish and Portuguese troops were wretchedly inefficient, though independent bands of warriors fought bravely enough. The people of the country, as Sir Arthur himself expressed it in one of his letters, could not be prevailed upon to take any



CONVENTION OF CINTRA.

trouble except that of packing up their goods, and running away directly they heard of the approach of a French advanced guard; and, worse than all, during the first expedition (for there were two, the first in 1808, and the second in the following year), Sir Arthur was only second in command, and was continually thwarted in his designs by his chief. Wellesley contrived not only to maintain himself in the peninsula, but to push steadily forward, gaining victory after victory over the superior numbers brought against him, and practically disproving the fallacy that the French were invincible.

The Peninsular War commenced in 1808 with two brilliant successes gained by Sir Arthur Wellesley at Roliça, where he forced the enemy from their position (17th of August), and at Vimiera, where he gained a complete victory on the 21st of the same month. But now a convention was signed, by which the French Marshal Junot agreed to leave Portugal and give up the plunder his army had collected. This agreement was called the Convention of Cintra, from being signed at a place of that name near Lisbon, and was looked upon as a mistake, for it was considered that the French had been let off far too easily. However, it was not Sir Arthur Wellesley's doing. In the same year General Sir John Moore entered Spain with 20,000 men; but he was outnumbered, and compelled to retreat. In a battle fought against Marshal Soult at Corruna the British gained the victory; but their gallant leader was slain, and after his death the army embarked for England.

In the next year, however, Sir Arthur Wellesley again entered Spain, having been appointed to the chief command of the army in the peninsula. Now that his plans were not interfered with, except by the withholding of assistance from home, he obtained a series of triumphs. The chief battles he gained between the years 1809 and 1813 were those of Talavera, Barossa, Albuera, Salamanca, and Vittoria. By the time this last-mentioned battle was fought, a great change had come upon the fortunes of the Emperor Napoleon. For a long time he had been triumphant. He had divorced his first wife, the Empress Josephine, and had married Maria Louisa, a daughter of the Emperor of Austria, who had borne him a son, who was called the King of Rome. Nearly all the continent had submitted to him, and for a long time the Emperor Alex-



ander of Russia was his friend. But a quarrel occurred, and in 1812 Napoleon invaded Russia with a great army. Here he was victorious in battle, as usual, and penetrated into the heart of the country, as far as Moscow, the ancient capital; but in Moscow there were not provisions enough for the huge army he had brought, and the French were obliged to retreat towards France in the midst of a severe winter. Thousands upon thousands were frozen to death. Thousands perished miserably of hunger and fatigue. Vast numbers were destroyed by the Cossacks—wild horsemen who followed the retreating army, killing with their spears all who lagged behind or were separated from the main body; and out of an army of nearly 500,000 men that had entered Russia in the summer of 1812, not more than 30,000 at the very most found their way home; and even these were in a most wretched condition, ragged, diseased, and hungry.

Thus the year 1813, which had witnessed the great battle of Vittoria, found Napoleon's power declining. He raised another great army; but at last Russia, Prussia, and Austria united against him; and on the 16th and 18th of October there was a tremendous conflict near Leipsic, in Saxony, in which 400,000 men took part, Napoleon being outnumbered nearly two to one. He was defeated, but for some months continued to fight with great courage and wonderful skill, to defend France against the foreign armies which were now in full march towards it. Sir Arthur Wellesley had by this time been raised to the peerage, under the title of Lord Wellington, in reward for his great services. He marched from Spain into France, gained the battles of Orthez and Toulouse early in the year 1814, and pushed onwards towards Paris. At last Napoleon saw the uselessness of further resistance. He gave up the throne of France, and that country lost all the territory she had acquired in the long war. The little island of Elba, in the Mediterranean, was assigned to Napoleon, and he was permitted to take 400 of his old soldiers with him as a guard. The nations rejoiced that the war was over. Wellington, who had already been created a marquis, was raised to the dignity of duke; and the sovereigns of Russia, Austria, and Prussia paid a visit to England, where they were magnificently feasted. That the great struggle was over was the general belief; but everybody was sorely mistaken.

King George III. had been heavily stricken while his armies were triumphing in the peninsula. The madness which had in former years attacked him returned in 1811 in a more violent form, and the venerable monarch became hopelessly insane. Though he continued to live, a poor blind old man, in Windsor Castle, for nine years more, his reign was really over, and the Prince of Wales was appointed Regent to rule over England in his stead. The Prince Regent was not a good man. While the country was suffering so severely during the great wars, he spent his time in feasting and in frivolous amusements. He was false and ungrateful to his friends, and unfaithful to his wife; and it is not to be wondered at that the English people looked upon his doings with indignation and disgust.

Another quarrel had arisen with America; and, as if there were not enough war in the world already, a new contest was begun in 1812 against the United States. This contest also was now terminated, and at the end of 1814 it seemed as though peace was once more to reign among the nations of the earth. Louis XVIII., a brother of the king who had been murdered in 1793, was seated on the French throne; and no one thought of the possibility of a renewal of the war.

But in the early spring of the next year a terrible piece of news flew like wildfire through Europe, startling all who heard it, and making many a king tremble on his throne. Napoleon had escaped from Elba, and had landed in France. At his appearance, the old soldiers whom he had so often led to victory flocked around him; the troops sent out to oppose him joined his standard; and fresh crowds flocked to him every day. He marched directly towards Paris, and as he approached, King Louis XVIII. and his court fled in dismay from the capital. Now it appeared that another battle must be fought. The nations once more prepared for war, and the British army, headed by the Duke of Wellington, was the first in the field. At Brussels the English established their head-quarters, and Napoleon marched into Belgium with his army, to face the great English commander for the first time.

On the 18th of June, 1815, a few miles from Brussels, was fought the memorable battle of Waterloo. Two days before, the Prussians, who had mustered an army under the old Field Marshal Blücher, were de-



THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO.

feated at Ligny; and now Napoleon thought he could annihilate the British army before the retreating Prussians had time to rally. The Duke of Wellington, besides his British soldiers, had a small number of Belgians under his command; but they were of little service, for they fled early in the day, leaving the British to bear the brunt of the battle: and a terrible fight it was. From noon till evening, throughout that long summer day, the French troops, who fought with furious courage, charged again and again upon the British forces; but they stood firm, and, when the squadrons of horse came rushing down upon them, formed into squares, pointing their bright bayonets against their foes, and stubbornly refusing to give ground. The duke was everywhere, encouraging the soldiers to stand firm, and reminding them that they must not yield; for "What," he asked the troops, "would they say in England, if the British army gave way?" Thus hour after hour went by. The carnage was frightful. Many brave leaders had fallen, and the heroic squares grew thinner and thinner. At last, towards seven o'clock in the evening, Napoleon ordered his Guards forward, to make a grand charge against the centre of the British—for new columns appeared in the distance advancing rapidly towards the field; and though Napoleon affected to believe that they were the troops of Grouchy, one of his own generals, he must have known that the new-comers were brave old Blücher and his Prussians. So the French Guards strode forward for a grand final effort. The British poured a withering fire into them as they advanced, and then Wellington gave the long-expected command to charge: the British raised a ringing cheer, and poured down in a line four deep from the heights they had occupied all day; and then the French wavered, and turned, and fled in confusion.

Blücher came up some hours afterwards; and to the Prussians was entrusted the duty of pursuing the enemy, and preventing the shattered columns from re-forming. All night long the pursuit was kept up, and the army of Napoleon was scattered to the winds. The emperor himself made his way back to Paris. There he proposed to abdicate in favour of his son; but no one would listen to him. Then he tried to escape from France to America; but the coasts were so closely guarded that flight would have been impossible. Finally he gave himself up to Cap-

tain Maitland, on board the British line-of-battle-ship, "Bellerophon," which conveyed him to Plymouth; and it was decided that he should be exiled to the far-off island of St. Helena, in the Indian Ocean. To St. Helena, accordingly, he was conveyed, in the "Northumberland" ship-of-war; and after living there in strict custody for six years, the fallen emperor died at his residence at Longwood on the 5th of May, 1821. Louis XVIII. was once more restored to his throne; and for some years an English army occupied Paris, to prevent any new outbreak of the partisans of Napoleon.

And now that the great war was really over, and Napoleon could disturb Europe no more, the effects of all this strife and bloodshed began to be severely felt. The National Debt, that is to say, the sum owed by the Government of England, had reached the tremendous amount of 800,000,000 of pounds; the nations of the continent had been plundered again and again until they had become poor; and trade and commerce languished everywhere.

The Regent had not gained the confidence of the people; they suspected, moreover, that the national funds were squandered: and disturbances occurred in various places. In 1817 a great calamity happened in the death of the amiable Princess Charlotte, the only daughter of the Prince Regent. She had been married the year before to Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg Gotha, to whom she was fondly attached, and the whole nation deeply mourned her loss. The old Queen Charlotte died in 1818; and, at last, in 1820, the king himself, worn out with age and infirmity, died quietly and peacefully, after the longest and most eventful reign in the annals of English history. There can be no more mournful picture than that of the old, mad, blind monarch, wandering drearily about the rooms of Windsor Castle, knowing nothing of the great events passing around him—never hearing the glorious news of Waterloo, never caring whether England rose or fell in the mighty struggle that was raging around him. As one of our poets has aptly observed:

" His eyes were sealed and his mind was dark,  
And he sat, in his age's lateness,  
Like a vision throned—as a solemn mark  
Of the frailty of human greatness."

And when the people remembered how earnest he had been before the great calamity of his life had fallen upon him—how he had loved his subjects and feared God—they forgot the faults of his character, and thought kindly of good King George.

## CHAPTER III.

### GEORGE IV.

The Cato Street Conspiracy—Execution of the conspirators—Caroline determines to be crowned Queen—Her trial—She is refused admission into Westminster Abbey—Her death—Insults offered to her corpse—Revision of the criminal laws—Revolt of the Greeks—Battle of Navarino.

By the death of George III. in 1820, the Prince Regent became King of England, with the title of George IV. The events of his reign are but of limited interest, compared with the gigantic struggle that occupied nearly a quarter of a century in his father's lifetime. At the commencement of the new reign, a plot was formed by some desperate men, at whose head was one Thistlewood, to murder the king and the chief ministers of the State. From an obscure street near the Edgware Road in London, where the meetings of the conspirators were held, this plot is known as the Cato Street Conspiracy. Thistlewood and his companions in guilt were taken, tried, and executed.

Some very lamentable passages occurred in the domestic life of the king. For many years he had been separated from his consort, Caroline of Brunswick, who had lived abroad; but now that her husband had succeeded to the throne, the queen insisted upon returning to England, although a large sum of money was offered her, in the hope that she might be induced to stay away. An attempt was made to pass a bill of "pains and penalties" against her. There is no doubt that her conduct had been far from correct; but her husband's had been so much worse, that the people were indignant at the idea of a man like the king complaining



BATTLE OF NAVARINO.

of his wife, whom he had treated heartlessly from the very day of their marriage; and thus many took the part of the queen, more out of anger at the king than from any love for her. In 1821 George IV. was crowned with great pomp at Westminster. The queen had announced her intention to be present on the occasion, and applied for admission at the abbey. But she was turned away; and this refusal, with other mortifications which she was made to endure, had such an effect upon her that she died soon after. It was arranged that her corpse should be taken from Hammersmith, where she died, to Harwich, to be thence transported to Germany, and buried at Brunswick. The people were determined that the procession should pass through the city, and when an attempt was made to oppose this design, they barricaded the streets. A riot ensued, and several were slain—a very miserable end of a lamentable career.

One great improvement effected in George's reign must not be passed without notice. The criminal law of England had for centuries been in a very bad state. The punishment of death was inflicted for very various crimes; so that it sometimes happened that two men, one of whom had committed a murder, while the other had stolen an article valued at a few pounds, were both hanged—as if their crime had been the same, and therefore deserved the same punishment. Through the exertions of two worthy lawyers, Sir James Mackintosh and Sir Samuel Romilly, this unjust state of things was altered, and a new scale of punishments introduced, graduated in proportion to the crimes for which they were inflicted.

The Turks had long held sway over Greece, and had oppressed that people in many ways. The Greeks now revolted, and the sympathy of some of the European Powers was with them in their efforts for freedom. It had been agreed that the Turkish fleet of Ibrahim Pacha of Egypt should remain in the Bay of Navarino; and as it appeared that the fleet was going to break this agreement, it was attacked by an allied squadron of English, Russian, and French ships, on the 27th of October, 1827. The Turkish fleet was completely destroyed; and soon afterwards the Greeks achieved their freedom, and chose Prince Otho of Bavaria for their king.



## CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION—DEATH OF GEORGE IV.

For some years attempts had been made to obtain a repeal of the act by which Roman Catholics were disqualified from sitting in Parliament or holding offices under the crown. Now a great portion of the nation was in favour of freeing or emancipating the Catholics from these restrictions, which were felt to be no longer necessary; but King George IV., and his brother the Duke of York, who, since the death of the Princess Charlotte, was the next heir to the crown, were violently opposed to any change. But the duke died in 1828; and after his death the old Test Act of the reign of Charles II., which had required all who entered upon any office to take the sacrament according to the form of the Church of England, was repealed; and thus Catholic emancipation was effected.

When this victory had been gained, the next question that arose was a very important one: it affected the representation of the people in Parliament. Many great and populous towns returned no members, whereas little villages that contained but few inhabitants in some instances returned two members; so that the members for such places represented not any portion of the people, but merely the proprietors to whom the "rotten boroughs" belonged. Therefore, political unions were formed, and the people became more and more determined that some change should be made. But while this agitation was going on the king fell ill, and died at Windsor Castle on the 21st of June, 1830, in the sixty-eighth year of his age, and the eleventh of his reign.

## CHAPTER IV.

### WILLIAM IV.

Popularity of the "Sailor King"—Revolution in France—Agitation in Ireland—The first English railways—The Reform Bill introduced in the Commons—It is rejected by the Lords—Riots in England—The bill passed—The cholera—Negro emancipation—Death of William—Fire at the Houses of Parliament.

THE Duke of Clarence, who now ascended the throne, had long been the most popular of the sons of George III., with the exception,

perhaps, of the Duke of York, the "Soldier's Friend." In his young days he had served in the navy under the name of Lieutenant Guelph; and the English, a nation of sailors, were pleased at the idea of having a sailor king. Moreover, William IV. was remarkable for his bluff, hearty manners; and thus his accession to the throne was welcomed with pleasure by all classes.

In July, 1830, a month after the king had ascended the throne, another revolution occurred in France. Charles X., who had succeeded his brother Louis XVIII., had made himself obnoxious by various acts of tyranny; and the people rose against him, expelled him from France, and elected Louis Phillippe, son of the "Louis Egalité," Duke of Orleans, of the first great Revolution, to be king. This success of the French raised the hopes of a certain party of malcontents in Ireland, who, under the leadership of Mr. Daniel O'Connell, an eminent barrister, hoped to obtain a reversal or repeal of the union which had existed since 1801 between Ireland and England; and this repeal agitation at last took a dangerous form, and threatened to produce a rebellion in Ireland like that which had desolated the island in the year 1798.

The first railway for passenger traffic between Liverpool and Manchester was opened early in this reign. The ceremony of opening the new line created a great deal of interest, and many eminent men, among others the great Duke of Wellington, were present on the occasion. An unfortunate accident occurred, resulting in the death of Mr. Huskisson, a distinguished statesman.

The desire to have a reform in the Parliament became stronger and stronger; and, chiefly through the exertions of Lord John Russell, a bill was introduced into Parliament, whose object was to amend the representation. The bill met with violent opposition, for many members in the House of Commons, and still more in the House of Peers, honestly thought that the change would not be beneficial; and among those who held this opinion was the great Duke of Wellington himself. When the bill had passed through the House of Commons, it was rejected by the House of Lords. And now the people became very indignant: great meetings were held, and many angry speeches made; and in some parts of the kingdom, especially at Bristol, riots took place, in which many



BURNING OF THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

people were hurt, and some even killed. The Duke of Wellington was insulted in the streets; and it became evident that the country was in danger of a revolution.

Then the duke showed his good sense by yielding to what he saw to be the general wish of the nation. When the question of the Reform Bill came on again, he rose and left the House of Lords without voting either for or against it; and a large number of peers, who were adverse to the bill, followed his example. So the bill became law, to the great satisfaction of the nation at large.

It provided, among other points, that towns which had fewer than 2,000 inhabitants should not send any member to Parliament, and that those whose inhabitants amounted to fewer than 4,000 should send only one. The seats taken away from these small places were distributed among the large towns and cities, like Manchester and Birmingham, so that the people were now far more completely represented than they ever yet had been.

The terrible disease called the cholera made its appearance, for the first time in the year 1832.

For many years several benevolent men had endeavoured to induce Parliament to pass a bill setting free the negroes in the West Indian and other colonies. Foremost among these advocates of the oppressed, the honoured name of Wilberforce deserves mention. At last they succeeded in their benevolent efforts; and from the 1st of August, 1834, all the negro slaves have received the boon of freedom. This measure cost the country £20,000,000 in money paid to reimburse the proprietors whose slaves were set free; but the money was well spent in doing an act of justice.

William IV. died of asthma on the 20th of June, 1837, in the seventy-second year of his age, after a reign of seven years.

The old Houses of Parliament, in which so many constitutional triumphs had been gained, were destroyed by fire on the night of the 16th of October, 1834. They have been replaced by a splendid pile of buildings in the Gothic style, erected by the late Sir Charles Barry.

## CHAPTER V.

### QUEEN VICTORIA.

The Princess Victoria—Her education—Marriage of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert—Character of the Prince—His death—Chartists—The Corn-laws—Penny postage—The Royal Family—The Great Exhibition—The Russian War—The Indian Mutiny—Marriage of the Prince of Wales—Conclusion.

THE Duke of Kent, the third son of King George III., died in the year 1818, leaving an only daughter, Alexandrina Victoria; and on the death of William IV., in 1837, this princess succeeded to the British throne. She was just eighteen years old, and, as she had attained her majority, the necessity for a regency was obviated.

The Princess Victoria had been left from her infancy to the care of her mother, the Duchess of Kent, a German princess, and had enjoyed all the advantages which the care of a tender and affectionate parent could give. Her education had been judiciously conducted; and in due time she rewarded the care lavished upon her, and became a pattern of every queenly and domestic virtue.

In the reign of this our beloved sovereign, the march of progress has been exceedingly rapid. Changes that used to be the work of centuries have been effected in a few years; abuses have been hunted out vigorously and reformed; the state of various classes has greatly improved; science, art, and general education have been developed in an unexampled degree, and good and healthy literature has become so cheap as to bring the means of instruction within the poor man's grasp; and finally, the noble example of our beloved queen has had a great influence upon the domestic life of the age.

Nearly thirty years have passed since Victoria acceded to the throne of Britain; and during those thirty years great empires have risen and fallen; Britain has been engaged in more than one hazardous war; and many perils and dangers have been encountered.

Early in the year 1840 the queen united herself in marriage to her

cousin, Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg Gotha. The union was crowned with the truest domestic happiness. The Prince Consort moreover gained ground every year in the affections of the English people. He was an enlightened patron of art and science, and furthered every benevolent object with a pleasant and kindly enthusiasm. Very general was the mourning in England when this amiable prince died, after a few days' illness, in December, 1861, at the early age of forty-two years.

The duty on corn, which raised the price of bread to a great height, produced much discontent at the beginning of the present reign. Associations of men calling themselves Chartists, from the fact that they strove to obtain the passing of a new charter to alter the form of government, arose in various parts of the country, and a riot of a serious character broke out at Newport. It was quickly suppressed, and the Chartist leaders, who, in other times, would undoubtedly have been hanged, were transported beyond the seas.

The question whether the duty should not be taken off foreign corn began to occupy universal attention. Those who wished the tax to be retained declared it was necessary to protect the British farmer against being undersold by the introduction of cheap corn from abroad; therefore they were called "Protectionists;" while those who wished to remove all restrictions from commerce called themselves "Free Traders." A league, with Richard Cobden at its head, was formed to obtain the remission of the taxes on corn: this association was called the Anti Corn-Law League, and at last succeeded in its object. The importation of corn into England is now free, thanks to the exertions of the League, and to the patriotic conduct of the great Sir Robert Peel, who nobly confessed that he had been mistaken in advocating a protectionist policy, and lent his powerful aid to remove the tax from the poor man's loaf; and though a great benefit was thus rendered to every man in the kingdom who had to work and provide bread for his family, it was found on trial that the British farmer was not ruined by competition, but merely had to exert himself to keep pace with the times, and, in doing so, became richer than ever.

One of the great improvements of this reign has been the introduction of the system of penny postage. For this we are mainly indebted to the



VISIT OF VICTORIA AND ALBERT TO KING LOUIS PHILIPPE.

genius of Sir Rowland Hill, the late secretary of the Post Office. An agitation for the repeal of the union between England and Ireland was recommenced, Daniel O'Connell continuing to persuade the people of Ireland that this object could be accomplished. He was accused of treason and condemned to a year's imprisonment, but an appeal was made to the House of Lords, who reversed the decision, and O'Connell was set at liberty. He died in 1847, at Genoa.

In 1840 the queen became the mother of a princess, who is now married to the Crown Prince of Prussia. The Prince of Wales, heir-apparent to the throne, was born on the 9th November, 1841. The queen afterwards became the mother of seven other children. They are:—Alice Maud Mary, 25th April, 1843 (married to his Royal Highness Prince Louis of Hesse, 1st July, 1862); Alfred Ernest Albert, 6th August, 1844; Helena Augusta Victoria, 25th May, 1846; Louisa Caroline Alberta, 18th March, 1848; Arthur William Patrick Albert, 1st May, 1850; Leopold George Duncan Albert, 7th April, 1853; and Beatrice Mary Victoria Feodore, 14th April, 1857.

In 1841 the English became involved in an unfortunate war with Affghanistan, which ended in failure and reverse. A British army completely perished in a disastrous retreat; and though Caboul, the capital of Affghanistan, was afterwards taken, this was felt to be but a small compensation for the sufferings endured. Very different was the result of a contest in India carried on by our troops under the command of the brave Sir Charles Napier. Scinde was annexed to the British dominions after the glorious battle of Meanee.

The Queen and her royal consort made several journeys to the continent—one in 1845 to Germany, to visit King Frederick William IV. of Prussia, and another to France, to exchange civilities with Louis Philippe, King of the French.

The year 1848 was marked by disturbances on the whole continent of Europe. Louis Philippe, the old French king, who had rendered himself obnoxious to his subjects by his avarice and duplicity, was expelled from France by a revolution in February, and a Republic was formed. Prince Louis Napoleon, a nephew of the great Emperor Napoleon I., was elected President of this Republic, which was converted into an Empire in 1852;





OPENING OF THE GREAT EXHIBITION OF 1851.

and ever since he has sat on the throne of France, with the title of Napoleon III., Emperor of the French.

In 1851 a great Exhibition of the productions of all nations was held in the "Crystal Palace" in Hyde Park, London. The experiment proved a perfect success, and was repeated in 1862. Similar exhibitions have also been held periodically in Ireland, at Paris, in New York, and elsewhere, but none obtained the signal success achieved by this first Exhibition, which was opened by her Majesty in person, accompanied by her royal consort and the youthful Prince of Wales. The second London Exhibition, held in 1862, was to have been inaugurated in the same way; but, alas! when the day came for the opening, the good Prince Consort had been dead some months, and the Queen was a bereaved widow, bitterly mourning her loss, and unable to appear in public among her sympathizing subjects.

The great empire of Russia, under the sway of the imperious and despotic Czar Nicholas, had for many years been extending its power in every direction; and at last, in 1853, the Czar attempted to execute his long-cherished project of dismembering the weak empire of Turkey. England and France would not allow this, and, in 1854, conjointly declared war against Russia; and thus for the first time these two great Powers engaged in a great war as allies, fighting side by side. The Crimea, in the south of Russia, was invaded;—and the contest is generally known as the Crimean War. The Russians fought with great courage and determination, though they could not gain one decided victory over the allies during the whole contest. The allies, on the contrary, first gained a signal success at the battle of the Alma, 29th of September, 1854; then vanquished the foe, but with heavy loss of themselves, in the famous cavalry combat of Balaclava; and then proceeded to besiege the strong fortress of Sebastopol. On the 5th of November, before dawn, on a raw foggy morning, the Russians attempted to attack the army by surprise, and then was fought the fiercest battle of the whole war, the famous battle of Inkermann, in which the Russians were thoroughly beaten. During the winter the troops suffered great hardships, and more died from fatigue and illness than from wounds inflicted by Russian bullet or bayonet. But the siege of Sebastopol was



HAVELOCK ENTERING LUCKNOW.

## THE INDIAN MUTINY—CONCLUSION.

vigorously carried on; and at length the stubborn Russian garrison was driven out of the place, and the English and French marched in and took possession. The Emperor Nicholas did not live to see his great fortress surrender: he had died while the struggle was at its hardest. And now a peace was made. England and France, having fought side by side, got to know each other better, became fast friends, and have continued so ever since.

In 1857 a revolt or mutiny broke out among the Sepoys, or native troops employed by the British in India. These treacherous men rose against their officers, who in many cases were murdered, with their wives and children. At Cawnpore a wretch called Nana Sahib massacred a number of English ladies, and caused them to be thrown down a well; and so general was the rising, that the greatest fears were entertained for the safety of the British empire in India. But the British officers and troops were equal to the occasion. Lord Clyde, who as Sir Colin Campbell had already distinguished himself in the Crimean War, was sent out, and marched at the head of his brave Highlanders to the relief of his countrymen; and the great and good Sir Henry Havelock likewise took a prominent part in putting down the mutiny and restoring peace and order. Many other British officers distinguished themselves by courage and endurance in this great struggle, and the conduct of the troops was beyond all praise.

The Prince of Wales, heir-apparent to the throne, having now attained to man's estate, on the 10th of March, 1863, was espoused to the Princess Alexandra of Denmark. On their public entry into London the royal pair were enthusiastically welcomed. Their marriage has already been blessed with the birth of two princes; and it may truly be said, that never has the British throne been so securely established in England as it is at the present day, when it is supported by cheerful obedience and earnest loyalty, justly earned by the virtues of the sovereign, and willingly paid by the whole British people.

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